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SATURDAY  
EDITION

# THE TIMES

No. 64,871

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 5 1994

Foreign education 'corrupt'

## Portillo says sorry after cheating gaffe

By Philip Webster and Jonathan Prynn

MICHAEL Portillo was forced into an embarrassing retraction last night after off-the-cuff remarks in which he accused other countries of corruption and of selling educational qualifications.

The Treasury Chief Secretary, one of the rising stars of the Cabinet, launched an urgent damage limitation exercise after what he admitted were "incautious" remarks to 400 Conservative students at Southampton University.

Mr Portillo swiftly realised he had gaffed in suggesting that students in every other country in the world paid for their academic qualifications and apologised for any offence he had given. "We are all human," he said.

Labour nevertheless accused him of making "gratuitously offensive" statements on the day that Peter Lilley, the social security secretary,

Michael Portillo moved quickly to apologise for his embarrassing slip of the tongue while addressing students. "We are all human," he said

announced a crackdown on foreign "benefit tourists".

Mr Portillo, the son of a Spanish republican, was defending standards in British public life in response to vigorous questions in the university debating chamber when he astonished students by saying: "If any of you have got an A level it is because you have worked to get it. Go to any other country and when you have got an A level, you have bought it."

Mr Portillo went on to compare spotless standards of business probity in Britain with nepotism and bribery endemic across the Channel. He said: "When you go into business you will win contracts because you are good at what you do. Go to a number of other countries and you would win contracts because your cousin was a minister or because you have lined the pocket of some public official."

Mr Portillo knew the moment the remarks were out of his mouth that he had made a mistake. He tried to correct

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Peter Riddell... 2

them by approaching the two journalists covering his appearance. He caught up with one and said he would like to put the record straight, but the second had already left.

Mr Portillo said later that he wished he had corrected the remark as soon as he made it rather than wait until the end. He had not intended to suggest that in all other countries qualifications could be bought, but that it could happen in "some" countries.

Interviewed on Channel 4, he said: "On the spur of the moment I chose my words poorly. I didn't say Britain was the only honest country in the world. But I certainly did say more than I intended because I was speaking off the cuff and I exaggerated."

"As soon as I finished my speech I moved to set the record straight. I said more than I intended. I am sorry if anyone was insulted by it. We are all human."

Downing Street made no comment on his remarks, and

Mr Portillo denied that he was making difficulties for the prime minister, who has called for greater self-discipline from his MPs. "It was precisely because I was defending the Prime Minister and the Government that this arose," he said. "People have been alleging there is sleaze in British public life. Sometimes they need to be reminded that we rate very high in the international league table of countries that have integrity and probity."

According to a detailed report of his remarks, Mr Portillo told his audience that there was a British disease of believing the worst of the country. "Most other countries don't suffer from that idea," he said. "Our standards of public life are far above what you will find in many other parts of the world."

Conor Burns, chairman of the university's Conservative association, said: "It was a very lively and enjoyable speech. Ministers tend to enjoy the more relaxed atmosphere down here — and they can say something that is perhaps a little bit more controversial."

John Cunningham, the shadow Foreign Secretary, said: "Our partners in the EU and governments and citizens of other countries will be astonished by the gratuitously offensive statements of a British Conservative Cabinet minister. That Mr Portillo revealed his abusive views about our neighbours and partners in such contemptible terms shows him to be unfit for high office."

"Far from Conservative ministers pointing the finger at politicians and business people abroad, they should look a little closer at home — to Conservative-controlled Westminster City Council, to the Scott-enquiry, to the Pergau dam finance scandal."

The German Embassy said: "We have an equivalent to the A level, which is every bit as good. There is no question that our students cheat. It is ridiculous to make such a comment." The Japanese Embassy said: "Educational standards in Japan are very high. We certainly do not buy our qualifications."

## Woodhouse walkies training attacked

By Steven Fox

BARBARA Woodhouse, Britain's best-known dog trainer, was blamed yesterday for helping to create a generation of injured and dangerous pets. Her reliance on the cry "Walkies!" followed by a sharp tug on the lead was cruel, said John Fisher, chairman of the newly-formed Association of Pet Dog Trainers.

The attack on Woodhouse, who died in 1988, was made as the association promoted its own training techniques based "not on yank and shout walkies" but on rewarding a dog for compliance with the owner's instructions.

Woodhouse had relied too heavily on a "violence and jackboots" approach, said Mr Fisher. "She was herself an excellent trainer of animals and at least got the pet owner to be aware of their responsibility to train dogs. But her methods of training were

based on First World War techniques of training. "I think she had a serious effect. She, through her popularity, made the average pet owner believe that the only way to train a dog is to put a choke chain on it. From that point of view she did a lot of damage."

Robin Walker, a vet, said: "From the 1970s onwards I have seen a stream of screaming dogs arriving at my surgery with damaged necks. Barbara had arrived with her choke chain. They can dislocate the neck and damage the voice box, arteries and nerves causing paralysis or even killing."

Dr Peter Neville, a dog psychologist, said: "No cruelty is ever justified, especially in training. Bad training causes dangerous dogs."

Wolf-dogs, page 4



Lady Helen Taylor, daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Kent, celebrating yesterday after announcing that she and her husband are expecting their first child in August

## O'Reilly trumps Mirror for paper

By Martin Waller  
Deputy City Editor

A FIERCE bidding war broke out in the City yesterday for *The Independent* and its Sunday sister title after Tony O'Reilly, the Irish newspaper magnate and head of the Heinz food giant, trumped an earlier takeover bid from Mirror Group Newspapers.

MGN entered the fray early yesterday morning with a £55.05 million offer for Newspaper Publishing, owner of *The Independent* and the *Independent on Sunday*. But even before the terms reached shareholders' desks Mr O'Reilly had moved to take a strategic stake in the business by means of a City "dawn raid".

Stockbrokers acting for Mr O'Reilly's Irish newspapers concern, Independent Newspapers, approached the key City institutions who have held shares in Newspaper Publishing since *The Independent's* 1986 launch, offering almost £1 a share more than MGN was prepared to pay, immediately gaining a near-25 per cent holding.

Brendan Hopkins, managing director of international operations at Indee, Continued on page 2, col 3

Dawn raid, page 19

## Danger virus tests lasted two years

By Edward Gorman

POTENTIALLY dangerous research into cancer had been going on for two years at a Birmingham University laboratory before health and safety inspectors made their first visit and ordered its closure, it was revealed yesterday.

It also emerged that the Health and Safety Executive has only two full-time specialist medical inspectors to monitor at least 150 laboratories across the country where simi-



Beringer: criticised poor standards at laboratory

larly hazardous research is being undertaken and where there is a risk of fatal illnesses. Inspectors found the Birmingham laboratory inadequately prepared for work with dangerous viruses and feared there could have been a potentially fatal escape of infected material.

An informed source within the executive admitted that "a large window" of risk had been allowed to develop for

20 or so research staff working there, during the two years before it was closed in December last year.

Researchers were using a virus similar to that which causes the common cold as a vehicle to carry genetically engineered cancer-causing genes into human cells cultured in the laboratory. Their aim was to study the effect of the genes on human cells to gain a better understanding of the mechanisms which cause cancer.

Last night Professor David Westbury, vice-principal of the university, moved to quell fears about the disclosures. He said there was at most only a theoretical risk that staff may contract cancer as a result of their work and underlined that the university regarded safety as paramount in its research operations.

However, Professor John Beringer who heads a government advisory committee on the safety of genetic engineering, said the researchers' failure to maintain adequate safety standards was inexcusable.

Inspectors found the laboratory to have been woefully ill-equipped from a safety point of view for the work that was being undertaken there. Their first concern was that it had been left as a large open-plan unit with open access to adjoining offices and to cleaning and washing-up staff.

Cancer hopes, page 5  
Nigel Hawkes, page 14  
Leading article, page 15

## Germans to bid for British Coal

By Ross Tieman  
Industrial Correspondent

A HUGE German conglomerate is preparing to bid for British Coal, just four days after BMW announced plans to take over the last British-owned car manufacturer.

Germany's Veba energy group has joined the Union of Democratic Mineworkers and an American deep-mining group to prepare bids for all or part of the remnants of the coal industry when it is privatised later this year.

Like BMW, Veba seems to be seeking access to low-cost production in Britain in response to high costs in Germany and it hopes to export cheap coal to the rest of Europe as production there declines.

The planned bid was confirmed as the closure of another four pits was announced yesterday, with the loss of more than three thousand jobs. By the time the closures are complete in the next few weeks, there will be only 16 deep mines left and British Coal's workforce will have been cut from 40,000 two years ago to 14,000.

The speed of the contraction of the British industry has astonished the industry in Germany, which is also being run down — but far more slowly. Bruce Ballantine, managing director of Cory Coal, Veba's UK coal distribution business, said: "Our German owners are staggered at what is happening in the British coal industry. Ruhrkohle is making the rundown in 15 years that this Government is making in 15 months."

Veba was confident that the UK mining industry could have a bright future and Mr Ballantine said: "There is a very good opportunity for the rump of the British coal industry that is left by this Government for private companies. What is left should be very competitive in world terms. Our own company is important."

Continued on page 2, col 8

More jobs go, page 19

## Cricket fans eager to outdo selectors

HUNDREDS of readers seized the chance to pick their own England cricket team yesterday in *The Times* 1st XI game. They showed no hesitation in stepping in to the selectors' shoes to predict how their chosen teams would fare in the West Indies.

The prospect of the trip of a lifetime to watch England play Australia in the Christmas Test at Melbourne awaits the reader whose predictions most closely match the real performances on the present West Indies tour.

Today Mike Gatting, the former England captain, makes his selection. He predicts that Michael Atherton's team will do well in the international matches, which



Gatting: makes his 1st XI predictions today

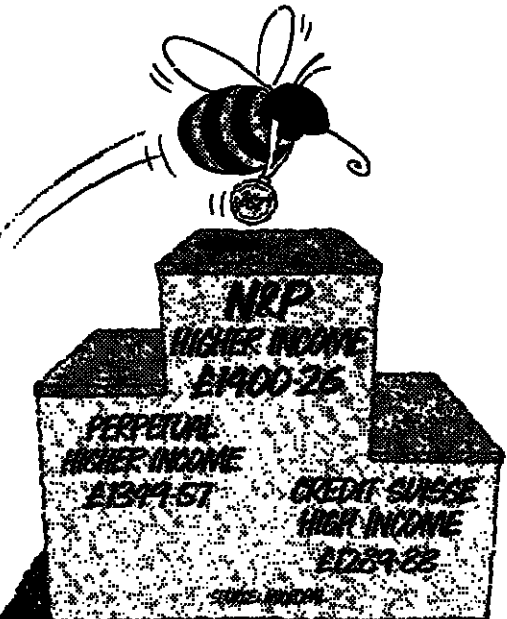
start in Barbados on February 16.

Although rain intervened as England's batsmen continued their innings against the Leeward Islands in Antigua, the touring team was usefully placed at 128 for three in reply to the Islands' 181 all out.

Atherton has decided that he will play in all of the four games prior to the international and in this, the third of them, he and Mark Ramprakash got off to a good start with a century stand for the first wicket.

Leading article, page 15  
Competition details, page 30  
Gatting's XI, page 30  
Match report, page 36

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Police chief attacks 'Elastoplast' reforms

The Home Secretary's proposed shake-up of the police threatens to turn officers into political pawns, isolate them from the public and could provoke Los Angeles-style riots, a senior Scotland Yard officer said yesterday (Stewart Tendler writes). Sir John Smith, Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, said there had been scant consultation. He feared that, in future industrial disputes, the police could become the "tool of Government".

In one of the strongest attacks mounted on government policy by a senior serving officer, Sir John, president of the Association of Chief Police Officers, denounced Michael Howard's plan to set national objectives for the police as a "superficial approach" to dealing with crime. "This superficial approach, undermining a constitutional concept which Home Secretaries have assiduously sought to protect, this Elastoplast culture which merely masks the wound from public view while failing to heal it is not going to produce what society seeks."

## Sex attack 'made up'

A mother of two who claimed she was subjected to a vicious sex attack in a park on her way to Bible classes made up the story, police said yesterday. The woman, 30, said that she had been bound and gagged, indecently assaulted and beaten around the head by a scar-faced man in Shaftesbury Park in Bromley, on Wednesday. She claimed she fell into a freezing stream as she struggled to free herself. But police said yesterday that they were satisfied no crime had taken place. No action will be taken against the woman, who is believed to be suffering from a psychiatric condition.

## Meningitis warning

The Government yesterday warned doctors to be alert to one of the most dangerous forms of meningitis. Dr Kenneth Calman, Chief Medical Officer, has written to doctors reminding them of the vital importance of early diagnosis and fast treatment of meningococcal meningitis. The symptoms of the disease, which causes about 150 deaths a year, are often confused with those of influenza although there is usually also a tell-tale rash. Dr Calman said: "Meningitis is a very serious infection, which is most often seen around this time of the year."

## Bulger father in court

The father and an uncle of James Bulger, the murdered Merseyside boy, were remanded on bail at Liverpool Crown Court yesterday accused of wounding two brothers in a Kirkby nightclub. Ralph Bulger, 27, and his brother Philip, 29, spoke only to deny two charges each of wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm. A trial was arranged for May 16 at Manchester. Afterwards Ralph Bulger declined to comment on the Home Secretary's decision not to meet him and his wife Denise over recommendations that James's killers may be released while still teenagers.

## Car sales 20% higher

Car sales in January rose to their highest level for four years. Figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders confirmed a *Times* report yesterday of a 20.36 per cent increase in new car registrations over January of last year. The total of 198,525 — an increase of more than 30,000 — was still substantially down on the 220,000 recorded in January 1989, the peak year for car sales. There were also signs of a revival in the commercial vehicle sector, with sales up 1.3 per cent to 17,642, an indication of increased activity in industry and commerce.

## Doctor wins court order

A senior doctor at the centre of the Inverclyde cervical smear case yesterday won a court order halting current disciplinary proceedings against him. Counsel for Andrew Reid, chief administrative medical officer of the Argyll and Clyde Health Board and director of public health, argued at the Court of Session in Edinburgh that preliminary investigations were carried out by the board's general manager, who had no medical qualifications. Last August an enquiry into smear testing at the Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Greenock, criticised the board for failures in its screening programme.

## Oscar winner in hospital

Robert Bolt, right, the playwright husband of the actress Sarah Miles, was "comfortable" in hospital last night suffering a suspected heart attack. He was admitted late on Thursday to a private hospital in Midhurst, West Sussex. Mr Bolt, 68, who has won three Oscars for his screenplays, has a history of heart trouble. He told his wife to leave his bedside yesterday to appear on television.

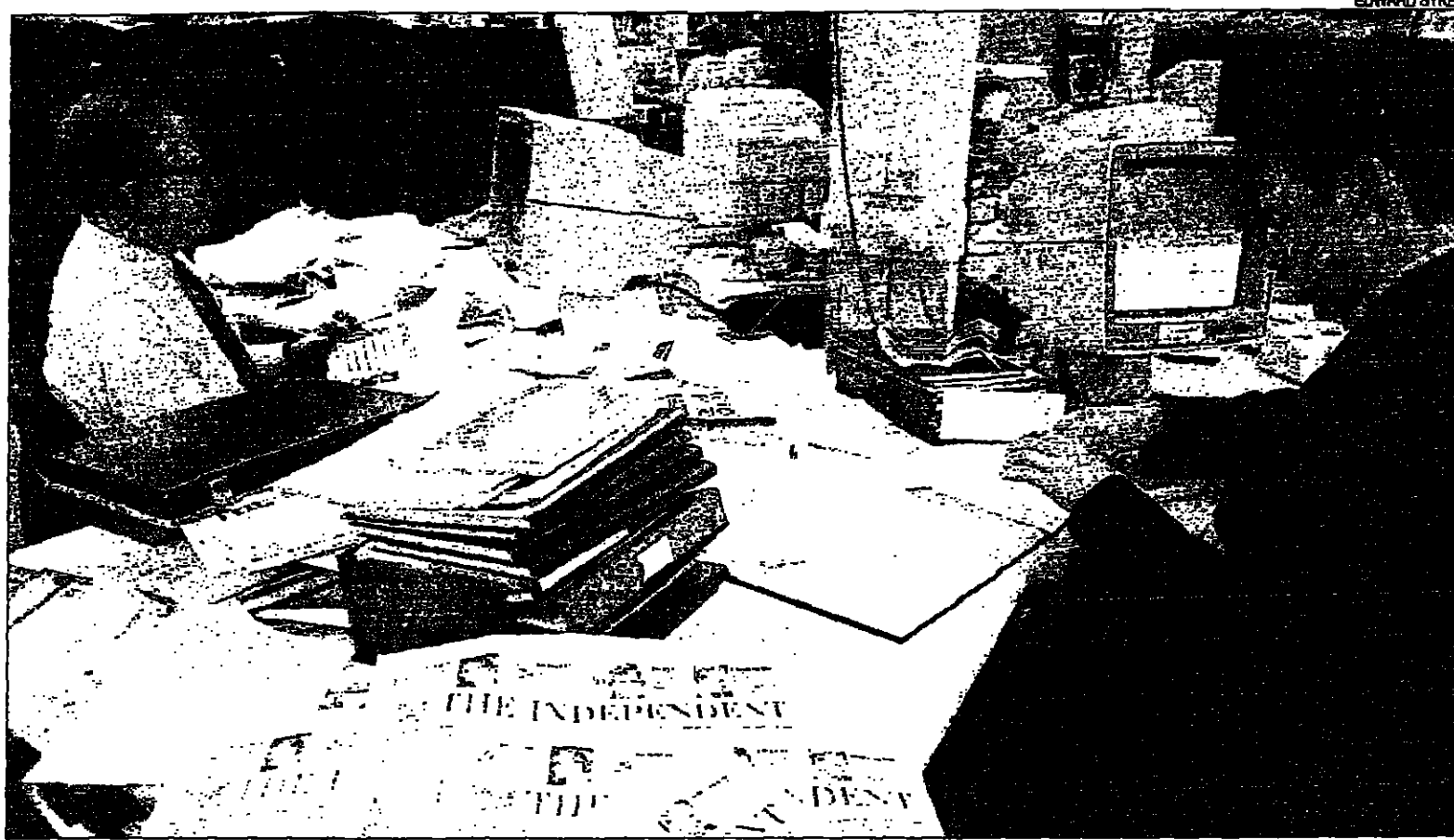


## MoD fights damages

The Ministry of Defence has appealed against the record damages awarded to a former WRAF officer who had to resign because she became pregnant. Nichola Cannock's award of nearly £173,000 was more than five times the previous record. Mrs Cannock, 39, who was a flight lieutenant, is now a physics teacher in Cambridgeshire.

## Vicar rejects godparents

The Rev John Beane, vicar of St Alban's in Broadheath, Cheshire, has refused to baptise a baby because her prospective godparents live as an unmarried couple. Mr Beane said the godparents of Abigail Lloyd set an "immoral and unchristian example". He said: "I am always concerned that those involved understand the Christian commitment required of parents and godparents in the baptism service." Although he has since apologised, the family decided to have Abigail baptised elsewhere. Louise Lloyd, her mother, said: "This is 1994, not 1894."



The newsroom at *The Independent* yesterday afternoon. Editorial independence has been guaranteed by the Irish, but not job security

## O'Reilly trumps Mirror Group for Independent

Continued from page 1

Pendulum Publishing, now *The Independent's* biggest shareholder, refused to give guarantees of job security among the more than 600 people employed at the paper's City Road offices. But he added: "I think they would be a lot safer with us than they would be with the *Mirror*."

The move is a blow for the *Mirror* Group, whose consortium bid was backed by the other two large shareholders in *The Independent*, the Span-

ish and Italian groups that publish the *El Pais* and *La Repubblica* newspapers, and by the paper's editor, Andreas Whitam Smith. Under their plan, the two Continentals would have ended up with just over half the equity and *Mirror* Group with almost 40 per cent.

City observers were speculating that the Irish might attempt to take their new holding higher in due course, perhaps by putting in much-needed cash in return for an eventual right to

hold further shares. A plan along these lines by Mr O'Reilly was tabled last week but expired shortly before the *Mirror* bid.

The *Mirror* consortium was insisting last night that the bid goes ahead. Both the bidders and Mr O'Reilly have said that they will safeguard the editorial independence of the newspaper.

"We don't come with any secret agenda," said Mr Hopkins. "We come to the table wanting to help."

Although they were not offered the cash, the "dawn raid" hypothetically places a higher value on the stakes of the other *Independent* shareholders, including Mr Whitam Smith, than does the *Mirror* Group.

The editor's 7 per cent holding, under the *Mirror's* terms, is valued at £3.85 million. At a price of 350p a share paid by Mr O'Reilly, it would be worth more than £5 million.

Dawn raid, page 19

## Lilley curbs benefit tourists with new residence test

By JONATHAN PRYNN  
POLITICAL REPORTER

PETER Lilley has fulfilled his Tory conference pledge to clamp down on foreign "benefit tourists" who travel to Britain solely to claim state hand-outs.

Foreigners claiming social security will have to show commitment to working and living in Britain, the Social Security Secretary said yesterday as he announced moves to crack down on European nationals doing a "cruel" tour of benefit offices.

A new residence test will be applied to all new claimants of income support, housing benefit and council tax benefit.

In his speech to the conference in October, Mr Lilley delighted delegates with his multilingual attack on unemployed European claimants. The criticism was prompted by reports last summer that thousands of continental Europeans, including drug addicts, were exploiting Britain's social security regime.

The new rules will bring Britain into line with most of the European Community and with Austria, Norway, Finland, Iceland and Sweden.

## The tightening of regulations for foreign benefit claimants will bring Britain into line with most other European countries

The new test will also apply to those seeking housing benefit and council tax benefit. At present, those looking for work can claim up to six months' income support but do not have to prove further commitment to the UK.

Britain's benefits regime was "liberal and unique" in its treatment of foreigners, Mr Lilley said on BBC radio. "It is a loophole which is becoming increasingly exploited."

The Government estimates that at least 5,000 nationals from the European Economic Area can claim benefits in Britain each year, at a cost of more than £7 million. The true figures are likely to be far higher but still tiny compared with the £80 billion annual social security budget.

However, experts questioned the scale of "benefit tourism". Professor Jonathan Bradshaw, of York University, said most European countries made more generous payments and that coming to Britain to claim benefits would be

an "absurd thing to do given the cost of getting here".

A range of criteria will be applied to test if a foreigner's claim for benefit is valid. They include: whether claimants have family living in Britain; whether they have had stable employment in Britain; the frequency and length of trips back to the claimant's home country; ownership of property in the home country; and the employment record there.

Donald Dewar, the shadow Social Security Secretary, said that while Britain should not be a "soft touch" for scroungers, the Government should concentrate its efforts on "reducing waste and inefficiency in the DSS and dealing with the chaos of the Child Support Agency, pensioners' poverty and cuts in incapacity benefit".

The draft regulations are to be considered by the independent Social Security Advisory Committee before the changes are introduced.

Portillo gaffe, page 1

## Clinton vetoed visa official

Continued from page 1

suggests the whole exercise of having Valentino Martinez, the US consul-general in Belfast, interview Mr Adams was a charade.

Mr Clinton was facing strong political pressure to admit Mr Adams from Irish-American Democrats in Congress including Senators Edward Kennedy and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, key committee chairmen who can make or break his health care and welfare reform plans.

Some of these Democrats had led Mr Clinton or his advisers to believe that Mr Adams would make some concession like a three-month ceasefire during his visit that would appear to vindicate the President's decision. White House officials were dismayed when he failed to do so, and to spare their blushes, Mr Adams was pressured into promising "concrete" decisions soon on the peace process during his farewell press conference.

The State Department asked Mr Martinez on January 27 to seek assurances from Mr Adams that he would renounce violence and support the London-Dublin declaration, and said it would decide on his visa application accordingly. Mr Martinez interviewed Mr Adams for 90 minutes the next day. Washington sources say Mr Martinez then sent a detailed cable stating that Mr Adams had

told him nothing of substance that was new and unequivocally opposing his admission.

Two days later — last Sunday — the White House nevertheless announced its decision with a statement that cited Mr Adams' "constructive comments" to Mr Martinez as its reason for letting him in. It had ignored Mr Martinez's superior knowledge of Ulster politics, and the British Government which had dismissed Mr Adams' statements as yet more weasel words.

Yesterday London decided not to lift the broadcasting ban on Sinn Féin, but dropped a move to tighten up existing restrictions. The move came as Sir Patrick Mayhew, renewed his appeal to Sinn Féin to join in talks that could involve a significant transfer of power to Northern Ireland.



Adams: turned down by US visa official

## Germans prepare to bid for British Coal

Continued from page 1  
ing into Germany two or three million tonnes of coal a year at the moment. The scale of imports into Germany and other countries will increase as production goes down. There is no reason why a share of that should not come from this country."

The Veba group has massive financial muscle and considerable mining expertise. It owns 40 per cent of Ruhrkohle, Germany's biggest mining group, which produces 55 million tonnes of coal a year. Its stake in the UDM consortium is being taken by Cory, which has been distributing coal in Britain for four centuries and is a leading player in the industrial and domestic markets.

As well as a nationwide distribution network, Cory has coal-washing and sorting facilities essential to supplying a variety of markets. Neil Greatrex, the UDM president, said Cory would bring valued skills to the consortium and "establishes us as the most credible bidder".

The third partner in the consortium is Jim Walter Resources, an American deep-mining group led by the Durham-born engineer Bill Carr. JWR combines deep mining skills with expertise in advanced techniques that could improve productivity in Britain. Mr Carr, who has been talking to the UDM for many months and who has examined several UK mines, believes output per man can be raised towards American levels, in spite of variations in underground conditions.

When British Coal is offered for sale later this year it will still have four-and-a-half years of supply contracts with National Power and PowerGen, worth more than £4 billion. Potential buyers will be invited to bid either for the whole or for any of five regions.

The UDM consortium is likely to face competition from RJB Mining, which plans to bid for the whole corporation, and from British Alcan and Ryan, a Welsh mining group, which has expressed interest in the North-East region. Coal Investments, headed by the former British Coal marketing director Malcolm Edwards, has yet to declare its hand, as have international mining groups such as RTZ and Hanson.

The latest round of closures, with the demise of Ellington in Northumberland, will bring to an end two thousand years of deep mining in the North-East. The other pits to close are Manion, Orlerton and Annesley in Nottinghamshire. When they have gone more than half of the remaining mines will be in Yorkshire, where the National Union of Mineworkers is strongest. There will be six in the UDM's Midlands power base. Two stand-alone deep mines, Longannet in Scotland and Tower in South Wales, will also survive, as will a spread of open-cast sites.

More jobs go, page 19

## Battle-hardened Major looks to the minefield ahead

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

It has been John Major's week, for once. His fighting speech to Tory MPs on Thursday marked a successful end to the first stage of his counter-attack, despite Gerry Adams's propaganda coup in New York.

It is far too early to say whether his run of bad luck is over. There are many serious problems ahead: April's tax increases and bad results in the local and European elections in May and June. But, in contrast to recent weekends, at least Tory MPs returned to their constituencies in a more cheerful mood.

Mr Major's frustrations had been building up since the flurry of stories a month ago about the personal lives

of MPs and with the repeated reports about manoeuvring by party factions. His patience was pushed to the limit a week ago when his speech in Leeds about the Government's priorities was overshadowed by Norman Lamont's criticisms in his interview in *The Times*. This was followed by a deluge of reports in the Sunday and Monday papers about rumblings over Mr Major's leadership.

Several ministers close to Mr Major have been pressing him to be more ruthless. They say he has been hardened by his buffeting over the past 18 months, his humour is more bitter and he is determined to see off his critics. They believe

he should give some of the cabinet rightwingers less leeway to sound off. Warring shots have already been fired with a couple of ministerial speeches being heavily revised at Downing Street's request.

Mr Major has also been urged to be more robust with press critics. Ministers are furious about recent attacks in newspapers normally supportive of the Tories. One said on Thursday: "We are not going to get rid of a perfectly good Prime Minister because of the press."

The hand of Christopher Meyer, the new Downing

Street chief press secretary, has been detected in the tougher line. He favours a more active policy, trying to set the agenda and secure more favourable coverage by providing the press with a regular flow of stories. But he is one among several advisers, also including Sir Norman Fowler, the Tory Party chairman, and Richard Ryder, the Chief Whip, urging Mr Major in this direction.

Above all, Tory MPs have been looking for more aggression from Mr Major. He has shown that recently at Prime Minister's questions in the Commons, in his curt dis-

missal on Tuesday of the leaked demands of the right-wing 92 Group for a cabinet reshuffle and in his fighting speech to Tory MPs on Thursday. This will be followed by more active campaigning outside London by Mr Major and other ministers ahead of the local and European elections.

More important in the long-term than the new "tough" image may be this week's decisions to defuse rebellions, notably the concessions over the Police Bill and over student unions, as well as the signs of greater flexibility in the reorganisation of local government to meet the worries of the Tory shires. Party strategists hope that the

avoidance of these pitfalls, an assertion of leadership by Mr Major and the growing impact of economic recovery will eventually turn round Tory fortunes.

This week's public relations success, however, may be merely that. The rumblings among Tory MPs, and in the press, will continue, though possibly muted for a few weeks. It will take more than a few fighting performances by Mr Major to revive the battered morale of Tory supporters or to boost the Tories' low poll standing. His sole comfort is that these ratings are not getting worse despite the battering of recent weeks.

PETER RIDDELL

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## Mistress jailed for blackmailing priest over 22-year affair

By PAUL WILKINSON

THE former mistress of a Catholic priest was behind bars last night after being convicted of blackmailing her former lover with threats to expose their 22-year affair and the child she allegedly bore him 17 years ago.

A jury at Leeds Crown Court found Olwyn Hirst, 66, guilty on four out of five specimen charges that she had extracted £55,000 from the priest, identified only as Father X, who retired from his West Yorkshire parish seven years ago.

Hirst, from Bradford, was married to a police sergeant and worked as a private nurse at the time of the affair. She had told the court that their relationship began in 1968 when she and the priest had sex in the presbytery where he lived.

She claimed that at the height of their relationship between 1970 and 1980 they had sex six times a week.

There had been weekends away in the Yorkshire Dales and trips to London to the theatre and to see the Bolshoi Ballet. She had posed as his housekeeper on holidays in Austria and Australia, and during a visit to the Oberammergau passion play in Bavaria.

They had also gone together to Italy on two occasions, once to see the Pope in the Vatican. The affair ended when the

priest confessed to his bishop and the police were called in. Father X had told the court that he had never seen the child and doubted it had ever existed, but had kept paying to keep Hirst quiet.

She claimed that the child, a boy called William, was born in a hotel room in Bourne-mouth where she had gone to avoid controversy. She said the child was given to an American friend who had

**"I don't hate her but a lot of what she has said was preposterous. We certainly never had sex six times a week"**

immediately taken him out of the country. The priest was told the money was needed for William's maintenance and to pay for operations on deformities to his hip and foot.

Father X, whose stipend never exceeded more than £2,000 a year, said the money came from bequests and donations.

Judge Savill remanded Hirst in custody for sentence while police compiled a report on whether she was capable of

paying compensation to the priest.

The court heard that during their affair in 1979 Hirst had been given an 18-month suspended jail sentence for stealing an £800 cheque from a 79-year-old patient, confined to a wheelchair, with whom she had had a long sexual relationship.

Clifford Lax, a former estate agent, lived with Hirst and her husband for five months until his death in 1977, during which time he spent £10,000 on meals out and sightseeing trips. He had also taken Hirst on a Baltic cruise, during which she claimed he had proposed marriage.

After the trial Father X said: "I know it was wrong but I am only human and I am not the first or the last to be weak. Other priests, royalty and cabinet ministers have been found out for doing something like this as well. Let me who has never sinned cast the first stone."

He claimed the affair ended ten years ago and he had gone to his bishop only after the cash demands continued.

"I don't hate her but I cannot forgive her for what she had put me through. A lot of what she has said was preposterous."

"We certainly never had sex six times a week and it is not true that I used to demand sex from her."

## Tell truth on Allitt deaths, say parents

By KATE ALDERSON

PARENTS of children murdered and maimed by Beverly Allitt yesterday urged staff at Grantham hospital to tell "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" about the circumstances of the attacks.

Speaking in London yesterday to publicise a television documentary they presented, the parents criticised Virginia Bottomley's decision not to hold a public enquiry. They said that health authorities at every level had denied them straightforward answers to their questions and they felt muffled by "an army of officials, politicians and medical experts".

Nurse Allitt attacked 13 children and murdered four of them at Grantham and Kesteven Hospital, Lincolnshire. David Crompton, 38, whose son Paul recovered after an attack by her, Judith Gibson, whose son Bradley was badly injured and Chris Taylor, whose son Liam was murdered, spoke in advance of tonight's Channel 4 documentary "Who Let Our Children Die? The Murders of Beverly Allitt".

In the programme they ask: "Is it possible, that with so little apparent willingness to allow public scrutiny, we may have lost the opportunity to prevent such a thing ever happening again?"

Mr Taylor said yesterday:



"Muffled by officials, politicians and experts": David Crompton, Judith Gibson and Chris Taylor yesterday

"We will let it lie when we get answers to our questions. The alarm bells rang at Grantham hospital — there were 26 heart and respiratory attacks in 13 children over 61 days."

Mrs Gibson, 38, a sales assistant from Grantham, said the Allitt murders could happen at any hospital

because the health service was so understaffed and short of cash. Mrs Creswen Peasgood, whose son Christopher survived one of Allitt's attacks, says in the programme: "We believe it could happen anywhere in the country. If that ward had been properly staffed, it wouldn't have happened."

The 40-minute film comes in the run-up to publication of the Clothier enquiry into the attacks, which has met in private. The film chronicles the sequence of attacks and asks why more was not done to prevent them and who must take the blame. The parents ask who employed Allitt, now serving life im-

prisonment, and examines staffing levels at the hospital. The enquiry team, led by Sir Cecil Clothier, met the parents for only 40 minutes. The Department of Health said that Virginia Bottomley, the Health Secretary, had received Sir Cecil's report, which would shortly be published in full.

## Baby attack man 'wanted jail term'

By KATE ALDERSON

A MAN sent on an anger management course after battering his baby's son said yesterday he "really wanted to be punished" and wished he had been sent to prison.

Patrick Weighell, 22, a former drug addict from Bourne-mouth, said: "It would be safe and people would think I'd got what I deserved."

Judge Pryor QC, at Bourne-mouth Crown Court, gave Weighell an 18-month probation order with the condition he attends the course. Last year, during the first six weeks of his son's life, Weighell broke his ribs and legs.

He said that if the judge had given him ten years he would have accepted it. "I was ill at the time, but I don't know in what way. I've still got to live and come to terms with what I have done."

The baby's injuries were discovered last October after a routine medical check. A broken thigh had gone unnoticed for six weeks.

Weighell told the *Bourne-mouth Evening Echo* he did not know that he had injured the child and emphasised that his girl friend Claire Phipps, the baby's mother, had known nothing of the assaults.

Ms Phipps, 21, said she was devastated by the sentence and said of her former boyfriend: "He's a bastard. I never want to see him again. I

thought he was going to get at least five years. He could have killed my baby."

Ms Phipps' mother Brenda said Weighell was a violent man who should have been jailed and she said her daughter was beaten up three times in the month before the child's injuries were discovered.

Jocelyn Ward, a probation officer, said Weighell had to be assessed to see if he was willing to change and had the motivation to attend the course once a week. "If he fails to attend he will end up straight back in court."

Jim King, of Dorset social services, said treatment for anger and aggression was becoming widespread in Britain within the probation and prison service.



Weighell: would have accepted 10 years

## Rape case lawyer to appeal

By FRANCES GIBB  
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

ANGUS Diggle, the solicitor sentenced to three years' imprisonment for attempting to rape a fellow lawyer he took to a ball in London, is to appeal against conviction.

The case, to be heard in the Court of Appeal on Monday, will turn on the most quoted line in the trial: "Well, I have been out with her. I spent £200 on her, why can't I do what I did to her?"

In October the Old Bailey was told that Diggle, 37, from Bolton, Greater Manchester, spoke the words to a police-woman as she drove him to the police station. The officer, Sgt Jayne Stratton, said he had threatened to commit suicide and that his speech was disjointed. From his facial appearance, "it was evident he had been drinking".

On Monday, Diggle's lawyers are expected to argue that the words should never have been admitted in evidence because Diggle was drunk, and also that the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, which requires an accused to be shown notes of any interview for signing, was breached. Diggle's lawyers allege this was not done until some eight weeks later.

Diggle had denied attempting to rape the woman when they returned to a flat where they were both staying.

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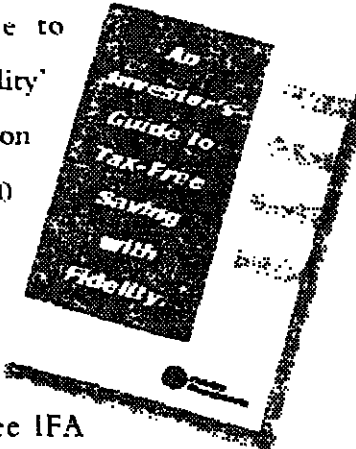
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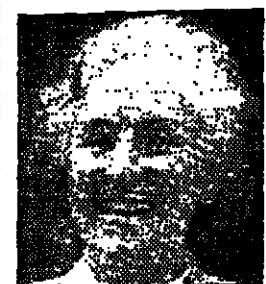
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## THE SUNDAY TIMES One careful owner

Today, aged 63, widowed for the past 11 years but devoted to her husband's memory, Johanna Quandt still drives daily to the BMW offices. With her nod, BMW scooped up the last major British car



manufacturer: Rover, too, now comes to the former secretary's well-turned heel. Johanna (above) is one of the world's richest women, worth an estimated £3 billion, yet she remains a little-seen recluse who lives amid high security...

Peter Millar on the woman who rules the BMW dynasty — *News Review, The Sunday Times* tomorrow

## Scholar claims new line to Bard

By ALISON ROBERTS, ARTS REPORTER

A HISTORIAN in Wales believes he has found two new poems by Shakespeare written in a commonplace book 400 years ago.

The claim, made in yesterday's *New Welsh Review*, comes from Tom Lloyd-Roberts, who has spent 30 years researching the life of Kathryn of Berain, the mother of Sir John Salusbury. Mr Lloyd-Roberts maintains that Shakespeare stayed at the Salusbury family home in Llweni, Clwyd, between October 1593 and April 1594 and wrote the poems as contributions to his host's commonplace book.

Mr Lloyd-Roberts said yesterday: "We know that Salusbury was a patron of Shakespeare and it is thought that the Bard might have worked on poems by a man called Robert Chester who was attached to the Salusbury household."

The commonplace book poems are written in a distinctive hand but the signature at the bottom is almost completely obliterated. Mr Lloyd-Roberts says that lines in the poems point to a detailed knowledge of

Salusbury family feuds. The manuscript is now in the library at Christchurch College, Oxford.

Mr Lloyd-Roberts said that he had asked the college to re-examine the poems several years ago, but nothing had been done.

John Wing, librarian at Christchurch, said: "If it was Shakespeare it would have been discovered by now. I think they are by Samuel Daniel, a poet of the same period."

But Mr Lloyd-Roberts remains unconvinced: "If my theory is right, the poems are of priceless importance; they are not only unrecognised, but may be in Shakespeare's own hand."

The verses, all in praise of Sir John, include these lines:

*Goe blasse abroad the  
pride of Brittain soyle  
for vertue manhood and  
for curtesie*

*The onely perle which all  
prowde wale doth foyle  
for kindly favour and  
sobrietie*

*Kind unto all both high  
and lowe degree  
to Riche and poor is  
worthy Salusbury*



## Boy sent on safari goes back to court

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A TEENAGE criminal who went on a £7,000 character-building tour of Africa was given a one-year supervision order when he appeared in court again yesterday. The boy was returned to the Bryn Melyn children's home, which sent him on the trip that prompted a public and parliamentary outcry.

The supervision order, imposed by Gloucester Youth Court, came little more than three weeks after a one-year supervision order imposed when he admitted 26 charges, including burglary, assault and motoring offences.

Yesterday the 17-year-old boy from Gloucester admitted attempted burglary, assault and two counts of failing to surrender to bail. A further charge alleging affray was withdrawn. The offences took place in May, months before the trip to Africa. The teenager, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was ordered to pay £25 costs.

Wearing jeans and an open-neck shirt, he sat alongside his mother in the courtroom as the magistrates were told how

■ The teenager who toured Africa says he is getting "sorted out" at the Bryn Melyn centre, despite committing more offences

he tried to break into an empty house at Coney Hill, Gloucester, on May 28. A pensioner found him hiding in a hut and waving a hammer. He grappled with the boy and police were called.

Steve Young, for the defence, emphasised that nothing had been stolen and no injuries had been caused.

Christopher Charlton, a staff member at Bryn Melyn, told the court: "He has responded very well. He has visited home on two occasions. There have been no problems while in Gloucester. That is quite a landmark in itself."

David Baker, from the social services department, said: "We are satisfied things have gone perfectly satisfactorily since January 12."

Questioned briefly by the magistrates, the youth said he was happy at Bryn Melyn, in Bala, Gwynedd, and believed he had benefited from his stay. He said he was getting "sorted

out", adding: "I am making progress slowly."

The previous court hearing was told that although the social services were returning him to the centre, he would be under a six-month residence order of close supervision. Bryn Melyn was only one of several places where he might continue his rehabilitation.

Yesterday the court was told that the boy faces a further court appearance on March 2 to answer charges of drink-driving and possessing an offensive weapon. He was arrested at Christmas, only days after his return from Africa.

In an interview with *The Times* at the beginning of January, the boy described his experience of Africa as "weird, stupid". He said the Egyptian pyramids were nothing special, "just bits of rock", but described Victoria Falls as "excellent... God's creation, untouched".



Tanya, one of the dogs bred in Nottinghamshire

## Wolf-dogs sold as family pets

By PAUL WILKINSON

A NEW breed of dog, three-quarters wolf and a quarter alsatian, is being sold as a family pet. The RSPCA says they could be more dangerous than such animals as the American pit bull terrier.

Several have been sold to homes in West Yorkshire where David Millward, an RSPCA superintendent, said: "I see no reason for creating this sort of dog in the first place. I am at a loss to understand it."

Julie Kelham, who has bred several hybrid wolves, said: "They are not nasty at all. She and her husband keep three adult hybrids and four alsatians in a 5ft high cage in the back garden of their council home at Newark, Nottinghamshire."

Mrs Kelham said: "The RSPCA don't like the breed, they fear they could be a vicious killing machine that will come out in the future, but the image of a big, bad wolf is all wrong. They are gentle and loving, a nervous, shy animal." She said her dogs often played with their children, aged eight and ten.

## North 'will lead property revival'

By RACHEL KELLY, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

THE housing market in London and the South-East will remain in the doldrums for the next 18 months, while the recovery in the market will be led by the North of England and parts of Wales, new figures show.

The research, by the economic consultancy First Europe and Shelter, the housing pressure group, uses a new model examining six market factors county by county.

They include figures for negative equity, repossession action by lenders, and unemployment, which help explain why the forecast is more pessimistic than previous predictions.

The research contradicts the view of most property experts that the recovery will take hold in London and the South-East first and ripple northwards. Savills estate agents, which last year predicted price rises of 19 per cent across the country, says that the recovery is expected to follow the pattern of previous cycles.

"In the past, the recovery has spread from London out to

the Home Counties and beyond," Yolande Barnes, head of research at the agency, said. Savills offices in Guildford and Sevenoaks in Kent have seen "extraordinary" levels of interest from potential buyers, Ms Barnes said.

The research, published in *Roof Briefing*, a Shelter magazine, found that recovery was most probable in North Yorkshire, and least likely in Avon.

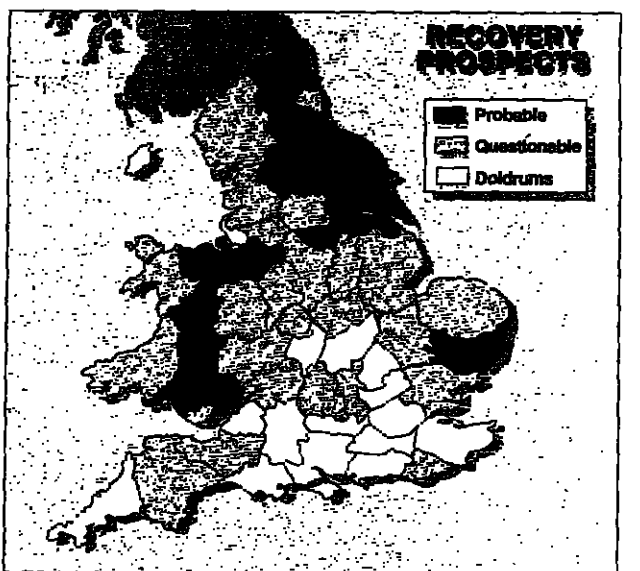
"Forecasts that predict overall increases in house prices this year are ignoring key regional disparities in the market," the research says. "To put it simply, there will be no uniform increase."

The research did not specify what exactly was meant by "recovery" nor did it volunteer estimates on price movements or on the volume of probable sales, which are merely "two of the many factors which will influence the market".

In the past week two building societies, the Nationwide and the Halifax, have produced contradictory surveys of national trends in the housing market.

First Europe, a consultant for many leading institutions and companies in the property sector, has ranked each of 54 counties in England and Wales according to their prospects. A reading below 100 on the index means a decline in activity and prices, a reading above indicates an increase. A rating of 100 means no change.

County	Index	County	Index
1 North Yorkshire	110	28 South Glamorgan	96
2 Gwent	108	29 Leicestershire	96
3 Humberside	108	30 Devon	96
4 West Glamorgan	107	31 Norfolk	96
5 South Yorkshire	107	32 West Midlands	96
6 Northumberland	107	33 Staffordshire	96
7 Suffolk	105	34 Somerset	96
8 Mid Glamorgan	105	35 Derbyshire	97
9 Powys	105	36 East Sussex	96
10 Chwyd	105	37 Greater Manchester	96
11 Durham	105	38 Essex	96
12 Cheshire	104	39 Cornwall	96
13 Cleveland	103	40 Herefordshire	96
14 Cambridgeshire	103	41 Merseyside	96
15 Lincolnshire	103	42 Kent	96
16 Shropshire	102	43 Surrey	96
17 Hereford & Worcester	102	44 Warwickshire	96
18 Gloucestershire	102	45 West Sussex	93
19 Dyfed	101	46 Dorset	92
20 Gwynedd	101	47 Isle of Wight	91
21 Oxfordshire	101	48 Bedfordshire	91
22 Nottinghamshire	100	49 Hampshire	91
23 Tyne & Wear	100	50 Wiltshire	90
24 Lancashire	100	51 Greater London	89
25 West Yorkshire	99	52 Northamptonshire	88
26 Cumbria	99	53 Berkshire	88
27 Buckinghamshire	98	54 Avon	87



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Prohibition order on work with dangerous viruses has been issued under tough new regulations

## Gene team was closing in on cause of cancer cells

By JEREMY LAURANCE AND EDWARD GORMAN

SCIENTISTS at the Birmingham laboratory shut by health and safety inspectors were close to identifying a gene causing healthy human cells to become cancerous.

They had isolated three proteins essential to transforming a normal cell into a malignant one and were trying to find the piece of the protein — the gene — responsible. The work involved inserting the suspect genes into normal cells using adenoviruses — viruses present in the adenoids.

The viruses were disabled to ensure they could not replicate but there was a "theoretical" risk that if a drop of the culture the scientists were working with had come in contact with the skin or the eyes or had been inhaled it might have triggered a cancerous growth. Research on potentially dangerous genetically modified organisms (GMOs) began in the mid-1970s. The first regulations were introduced in 1978 and have been tight-

ened twice since — in 1989 and again last year. Institutions carrying out the research have to register with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and must notify it in advance of any work they are going to do.

The HSE has no role in determining whether research should be allowed to go ahead on ethical or moral grounds. It is solely concerned with safety. "Our task is to say: is this safe? First, for the employees at these establishments, and second, for the public," Phillip Dent, of the executive, said.

The HSE's rules governing work into genetically modified organisms (GMOs) divide research into two categories: group 1, involving research on organisms which present no threat to health; and group 2, where at least a minimal threat exists. It is for the executive's inspectors to decide case by case how often each establishment should be visited. The Birmingham laboratory is one of about a hundred

research centres on the group 2 list. A "prohibition order" was served on Professor Philip Gallimore, who runs the cancer studies department, on December 16 after a visit by an HSE inspector. It was extended to the whole university five days later.

Last week an "improvement notice" was issued, stating that the university was in breach of the regulations governing the use of hazardous substances.

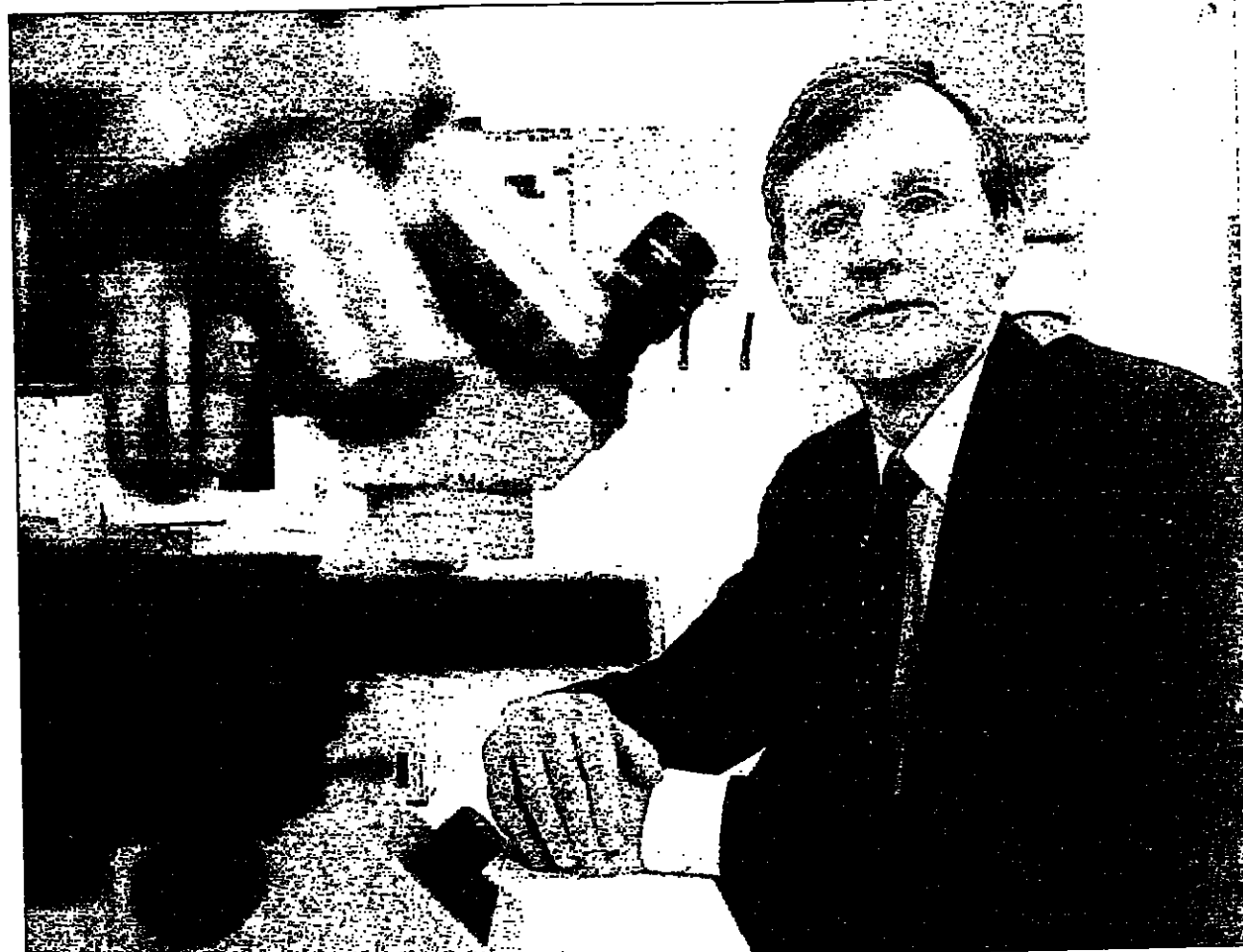
It said the work involving "wild-type and genetically modified hazardous micro-organisms" was being undertaken "in a manner that did not adequately control foreseeable exposure of staff and others (and in the case of genetically modified material, the environment) to those hazardous micro-organisms". The order set a deadline of April 7 for the procedures to be improved if the work was to be allowed to go ahead.

The prohibition order is the

first to be issued under the tougher "contained use" regulations that came into force a year ago, and is believed to be the first time the HSE has stopped work of this kind. A spokesman said safety precautions in the laboratory were inadequate but declined to provide further details because the work was "academically confidential".

The Cancer Research Campaign, which is funding the research, said in a statement there was no danger to the public. HSE inspectors had felt there was a "theoretical risk" restricted to researchers handling the virus. "This work has been discontinued since December and the campaign will not reopen the labs until we and the inspectors are satisfied that any risk, no matter how small or theoretical, is removed."

Inspection delay, page 1  
Nigel Hawkes, page 14  
Leading article, page 15



Professor David Westbury in one of the Cancer Research Campaign labs at Birmingham University

### Budget cut forces Greek off timetable

By BEN PRESTON  
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

ONE of the last state schools to teach ancient Greek is to drop the subject to save £13,000 from an annual budget of £1.54 million.

Governors at Colchester Royal Grammar in Essex are under pressure from parents and teachers to reverse the decision to remove Greek from the timetable after almost 50 years.

The school, which finished among the top 50 state schools in last summer's national examination league tables, has long enjoyed a strong reputation for classics. But pupils who started GCSE and A-level courses in the subject in September will be the last. The head teacher is blaming financial difficulties arising after the school became grant maintained last term.

The decision has been condemned as myopic by the Co-ordinating Committee for Classics. Dr Peter Jones, senior lecturer in classics at Newcastle University, said: "It is a shameful and short-sighted decision that threatens the future of something unique."

Terry Bird, head of classics at Colchester, said the language was popular with pupils. "This is the only state school in a very wide area that offers Greek."

He said former pupils went on to win 15 firsts in Classics at universities during the 1980s, including nine in "Greats" at Oxford.

Stewart Francis, the head teacher, said that as a former Cambridge classicist he deeply regretted the governors' decision and appealed for a sponsor to come forward to allow Greek to continue.

### RAF crew finds cargo ship victims

By GABRIELLA GAMINI

HOPES of finding any survivors from the cargo ship *Christinaki*, which sank 280 miles southwest of Cork, disappeared last night as helicopters were sent to recover the bodies of three crewmen.

The victims, wearing orange survival suits, were spotted by an RAF Nimrod early yesterday as the search continued amid gales and 50ft waves. Contact with the *Christinaki* was lost late on Thursday after it reported that it was flooding because one of its holds had been forced open in the storm.

Cornish coastguards said the weather had hampered their search.

Several rubber inflatable lifeboats were found overturned by the huge waves. They were not fitted with reflectors and so were difficult to pick up on radar.

Mike Collier, a Falmouth coastguard, said: "We have sent out helicopters to recover the three bodies but this is a very high-risk operation and we are having to put the lives of our crewmen at risk. The weather is extremely bad."

The crew of 27 on board the Maltese-registered vessel, which was carrying scrap metal, are believed to have been of various nationalities.

Maritime experts called for more stringent enforcement of safety regulations. Roger Kohn, spokesman of the International Maritime Organisation, said: "Some countries have more accidents than others, which means that they are not implementing safety regulations properly."

The Maltese authorities are expected to launch an enquiry into why lifeboats on the *Christinaki* failed.

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Going Places



# Was overseas aid the quid pro quo for billion-pound arms deal?

By CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT  
AND ANGELA MACKAY

ONE question lies at the heart of the Pergau dam affair: did the British Government bend its own rules to give a record sum in civilian aid to Malaysia as a "sweetener" to secure a £1 billion plus arms deal?

It is a question that has hung in the air since April 1988 when a hydro-electric project on the Pergau River in the mountainous north of Malaysia was identified as being suitable for aid. Just one month later, Lord Younger of Prestwick, then defence secretary, signed a protocol committing the Malaysian government to buy UK defence equipment.

Since then, there have been repeated allegations by opposi-

tion MPs in Britain and Malaysia that the deals were specifically linked and a wealth of circumstantial evidence to back up those claims. The government has always strongly denied the link.

Moreover, last October the National Audit Office published a report that heavily criticised the British Government for approving aid against the overwhelming commercial and technical advice of its own civil servants.

Worse was to come. Sir Tim Lankaster, former permanent secretary at the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), told the Commons Public Accounts Committee three weeks ago that the power station was "unequivocally a bad one in economic terms" and an abuse of the aid programme. He also disclosed

■ The tangled web of the Malaysian dam affair and the expenditure of £234 million may conceal links beyond just an abuse of the aid programme

that he asked for a written order from Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary, to authorise the aid expenditure of £234 million.

As further details emerged piecemeal the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee decided to hold an enquiry. Mr Hurd is to give evidence before it and they may also call John Major and Baroness Thatcher to explain their roles in the affair.

Mr Hurd has conceded in a written answer to Dr Jack Cunningham, shadow Foreign Secretary, that Malaysian ministers

asked Lord Younger for aid during their discussions in March 1988. After consulting ministerial colleagues in London, Lord Younger wrote to the Malaysians in June 1988, telling them that the aid could not be linked. However, he said recently that someone — not him — did give a verbal undertaking that the two would be.

An article in *The Economist* claims that the protocol specifically linked aid to arms on a percentage basis.

His visit paved the way for a trip in September 1988 by Lady

Thatcher, who signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Malaysian premier Dr Mahathir Mohamed, an old friend and admirer.

Details of the MOU have never been published, but the deal included the sale of Tornado aircraft, two frigates (now frigates), two Martello radar systems, a command, control, communications and intelligence system and two army bases. The equipment was to be supplied by British Aerospace and GEC.

In March 1989, the ODA made a tentative offer of aid for the Pergau dam conditional on a full economic appraisal of the project.

Later that month, Balfour Beatty and Cementation International, partners in the dam's construction, gave a revised estimate of

construction costs as £397 million. After an economic appraisal, the ODA decided in February 1990 that the Pergau dam was a "very bad buy at the price". A year later, the cost rose to £417 million and the ODA concluded that it would cost Malaysian consumers £100 million more over 35 years than other energy sources.

But five months later, Mr Hurd, after consulting Mr Major, overruled those objections because, as he said subsequently, Britain was bound by an undertaking at "the highest level", understood to be a reference to Lady Thatcher when she was Prime Minister. He ordered the expenditure of £234 million over 14 years.

The Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee's questioning is likely to examine other potential

links to the affair. One relates to a decision by two British ministers to block the release of documents in the trial of the Malaysian businessman Lorrain Osman.

While on remand for seven years in British jails, Mr Osman tried to gain access to 150 telexes between the Malaysian, British and Hong Kong governments which, he said, would implicate politicians in the £600 million collapse of Bank Bumiputra and explain his role more clearly.

The documents, however, were suppressed by public interest immunity orders. A Malaysian politician has alleged that the immunity orders were the quid pro quo prompting Dr Mahathir to abandon his "Buy British Last" policy and sign the memorandum with Lady Thatcher.

## Yard police go nationwide to find anti-Nazi riot leaders

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

DETECTIVES from Scotland Yard will travel to every police force in Britain to try to track down the 80 rioters at the heart of last October's battle between police and anti-Nazi protesters in south London.

The plan was unveiled yesterday as the Yard issued photographs and video camera footage of those at the centre of the trouble at Welling when demonstrators tried to march to a British National Party headquarters. Detectives will visit police stations around the country to see if local officers can identify any of the suspects.

Two hundred officers were hurt when rioters hurled bricks, rocks and metal fenceposts ripped from gardens in Welling. The injured included Insp William Woodhall, whose jaw was fractured, and a black constable, PC Les Turner, now an acting sergeant, who was taunted and attacked. Both men are now back on duty.

Det Supt Douglas Auld, leading the enquiry into the incident, said about a thousand people were involved in the trouble which erupted when protesters were prevented from marching past the BNP headquarters. Up to 300 people committed offences but police have decided to pursue only the most serious.

Leaflets found after the march supported police intelligence reports that protesters travelled from as far north as Dundee, as far west as Plymouth and all main cities in between. Thirty-seven people were arrested on the day and 28 charged with offences ranging from threatening behaviour to rioting.

Six people were charged with rioting after detectives circulated 34 photographs of suspects through internal channels. A team of investigators has spent months work-

ing on film from the march, matching different clips and enlarging areas to show offenders more clearly.

The police investigation, codenamed Operation Fordwich, has produced more than 1,250 still pictures and 50 hours of video film. In the aftermath of the Broadwater Farm riots in north London in 1985, when one policeman was killed, Scotland Yard began to improve its techniques for tracking rioters on film. Officers are now trained to work in the front line of riot squads using equipment to identify attackers for later prosecution.

Det Supt Auld said that each photograph of the Welling demonstration had to be checked and cross-referred up to ten times. Video film was viewed up to 50 times by a team of 20 officers and a computerised database was set up at the investigation centre in south London.

He said that, although most of the 15,000 marchers were peaceful, there was "an element there who had the express intention of disrupting the demonstration and having a go at the police."

He said the most serious offenders could face up to ten years in prison under new legislation. The people now being hunted were the "real hard core".

Appealing for help from the public, Det Supt Auld said: "We have enough evidence against these people to justify arrest. We need to know who they are."

Organisers of the demonstration, including the Anti-Nazi League, Youth Against Racism in Europe and the Indian Workers' Association, criticised police for provoking trouble. Det Supt Auld said that, after studying the videos, he was "absolutely satisfied police did not start anything that day".

Before the inquest, Mr Goodall's step-father, Kenneth Goodall, confirmed that his son lost two brothers to violent deaths. Paul Goodall's three-year-old brother Stephen was murdered by his father and his body was not found for 25 years. His step-brother Barry, 27, committed suicide in his cell at Dartmoor prison during rioting.

The coroner said many en-



Faces in the crowd at last October's Welling riot. Scotland Yard detectives released the photographs in an attempt to identify the ringleaders

## Local hero's assassination was family's third tragedy

By A STAFF REPORTER

A BRITISH relief worker shot dead in a Bosnia ambush a week ago was the victim of an execution-style killing, an inquest was told yesterday.

Paul Goodall, 35, employed as an aid worker/driver by the Crown Agents in London, was shot three times in the head after gunmen hijacked the Land Rover he was driving in Zenica, a Muslim-controlled area of central Bosnia. Two other aid workers with him were wounded.

The inquest into his death was opened and adjourned for further enquiries by Mark Hinchcliffe, the Bradford District Coroner, who said Mr Goodall was regarded as a local hero. The coroner was told Mr Goodall, a father of four young daughters, of Earby, near Skipton, had been shot three times in the head.

Dr Jan Lowe, a pathologist,

said one of the shots had been fired just six to eight inches from his head. He said the angle of the wounds suggested Mr Goodall had his head bent at the time and were "typical of an execution-style murder".

Dr Lowe said he believed the third round was fired when Mr Goodall was already incapacitated or dead on the ground. The official cause of death was given as gunshot wounds to the head.

The coroner said many en-

quiries had still to be made but it was already apparent Mr Goodall died while seeking to help others. "Neither he nor his colleagues were armed. His presence there was humanitarian. He was there on behalf of the British people to give food and aid to the starving and the suffering."

"Small wonder then that this tragedy has touched all our hearts and that everyone in this area thinks of Paul as something of a local hero whose death could not have been more untimely or tragic."

He adjourned the inquest to a date to be fixed.

Until April 1992, Mr Goodall was in the Royal Engineers but he left the Army after his posting in the Gulf. His body was flown to Brize Norton and transferred to Bradford, where his parents live, early yesterday.

## Soldiers ski in footsteps of Shackleton

By A STAFF REPORTER

A TEAM of 14 soldiers is planning to ski across the glaciers of South Georgia, the remote island in the South Atlantic which was recaptured from the Argentinians during the Falklands conflict in 1982.

The men from the 1st Battalion The Green Howards, based in Catterick, North Yorkshire, will retrace an epic journey undertaken by Sir Ernest Shackleton in 1916.

The officers and men plan a 40-mile ski traverse across the glaciers which make up most of the island's interior. The idea for the expedition came in 1990 when The Green Howards provided the garrison for the island on a six-month tour. The team leaves for South Georgia in a week's time.

## Obsessed arsonist given life for second barn raid

By A STAFF REPORTER

AN ARSONIST jailed for life for burning down a barn was given a second life sentence yesterday for destroying the rebuilt barn 23 years later.

Mr Justice Tucker criticised campaigners who had petitioned for Maurice Bland to be freed from his first life sentence and said: "This time life should mean life."

Bland, a 57-year-old bachelor, was still obsessed with the idea that he had been cut out of the will of his boss's wife, Sheffield Crown Court was told. He admitted arson and being reckless as to whether the lives of Geoffrey Graham, a farmer, his wife and two sons would be endangered.

The judge, who said the story was the stuff of fiction, said: "You have a fixed grudge against this family for no reason at all. Whilst you are at

liberty they are in danger."

Andrew Dallas, for the prosecution, said Bland was jailed for life in 1970 for burning down a barn at Littlethorpe, North Yorkshire.

Five years earlier, Edward Graham's wife had died from cancer and Bland, a farmworker, believed she had left him money. Mr Dallas said: "No such will turned up and Bland believed her husband, his boss, had burnt it and forged a new one, the effect of which was to cut him out of the legacy."

Since being jailed he had sent numerous letters to the Graham family with threats, transferring his anger from Edward Graham to his son Geoffrey, who took over.

Mr Dallas said the case became a cause célèbre with MPs among those calling for

his release. But history repeated itself when Bland was let out of prison last October to go shopping in Leeds.

Instead, armed with two cigarette lighters and two boxes of matches, he went to the barn and set fire to more than 8,000 bales of hay, destroying a combine harvester and other tools, causing damage estimated at more than £30,000.

Bland told police that he had a deep-seated hatred for Geoffrey Graham and wanted to shoot him. If he were to be released from prison again he would burn down any new barn. "I'll keep doing it — I will," Bland said. "For a laugh, I laugh at him."

Henry Prosser, for the defence, said psychiatrists did not think Bland was mentally ill. "He is just obsessed with his grievance."

## Promotion victory backfires on women academics

By JOHN O'LEARY  
EDUCATION EDITOR

WOMEN academics have won only two of the 19 promotions they forced out of Oxford University in last summer's revolt over male domination of professorships.

The decision to appoint more readers appears to have backfired and may result in the promotions system being scrapped.

More than a fifth of the 150 applications for promotion from lecturer to reader came from women, in line with the proportion in the university as a whole. Only Dr Frances Kirwan, a mathematician from Balliol, and Dr Carol Jordan, a theoretical physicist from Somerville, were selected.

Most faculties put men at the top of their list of priority candidates, leaving the university's promotions board with little room for manoeuvre. John Peach, the chairman of the general board of the faculties, said the university regretted that more women had not been appointed and added that several others would have been selected if more posts had been available.

Gillian Morris-Kay, a lecturer in human anatomy and a member of the Women's Tutor Group, said: "There is general disappointment with the outcome, but it is somewhat muted because the small number of appointments makes it difficult to draw definite conclusions. We worked terribly hard for this not to happen, and now it has. We have to see it as water under the bridge and try to ensure that the system is improved."

Dr Morris-Kay said the imbalance suggested that the criteria for promotion favoured men. Women academics hoped that a fairer system would emerge from a review of the promotions system, which has been under way since last year.

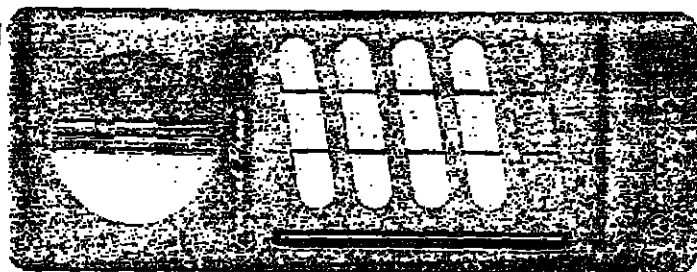
At that time the decision to create more readerships followed a lengthy controversy which culminated in a vote by the whole academic body. The university promised to consider factors such as career breaks for mothers in making the appointments, but selections had to be made from the faculties' shortlists.

Dr Peach said no decisions had been reached in the review, which is approaching its final stages, but there was strong support for abolishing the current promotions procedures and returning to the university's traditional structure. This would mean restricting the number of professors and readers and making all senior appointments open to international competition.

Dr Peach said: "I have great sympathy with the view that the proportion of women among the academic staff in general is too low. As the numbers go up, as we all hope they will, there are bound to be more women in senior positions."

The move to revamp Oxford's academic hierarchy is supported by dons who believe that professorships have been devalued by the way the title has mushroomed in the new universities.

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# Prince's solo performance brings smiles on all sides

IF THE Prince of Wales had bothered to read the placards waved by a handful of demonstrators outside the hospital named in his honour in Brisbane, he might have taken exception to "Pro-republic Charles - good on you." Others read: "Give the throne the Royal flush" and "Royal rule uncool".

The author of the first had clearly not been paying attention to the keynote speech the Prince delivered in Sydney last week. One of the main aims of his two-week Australian tour, which ended in Brisbane last night, was to state his position on the republican question. He conceded in Sydney that those who wished to cut the bonds of monarchy might be right, but he also reminded his audience that adherence to the Crown was a system that had served the country well. His main message, about which he wished his audience to be in no doubt, was that it was a matter for Australians.

The Prince was carefully even-handed and monarchists and republicans in equal measure claim him as their man. Commander Richard Aylard, his private secretary,

*The Prince of Wales ends a two-week tour of Australia with his image considerably enhanced, Alan Hamilton reports*

said yesterday it was for others to judge whether the tour had been a success. The Prince, although tired by a heavy schedule and the need to cover vast distances, had certainly enjoyed himself.

"He has done what he came out to do. He wanted to make a measured contribution to the republican debate and leave people in no doubt what his views are. The Prince will not regard it in any way as a personal failure or tragedy if they do vote for a republic. He believes the Australians have to decide what is best for them," Cmdr Aylard said.

Opinion polls find Australians evenly divided on keeping or discarding the Crown although, in the last days of summer, they are not widely interested in the matter. During the Prince's visit, the country has been rather more exercised by Allan Border's drawn series with the visiting South Africans, the country's

rosy prospects for economic growth as a key player in the Asia-Pacific region, and a tacky political scandal involving a cabinet minister.

The Prince has received favourable - if not enormous - media coverage and crowds have been respectable. He is now a solo act, having dispensed with the glamorous crowd-puller who used to accompany him. He has been on trial, to see if he can carry the show on his own, and has largely succeeded.

The shooting incident at Darling Harbour provided a tremendous boost to his public image, and the nation is full of admiration for the cool way he dealt with it.

Even before that, the crowds he moved among were warm, friendly and polite. No one said what a shame it was that the Princess was no longer with him.

No one mentioned Camilla, at least not in his hearing.

Once he had moved out of earshot, they tended to say that Camilla was the Prince's business and good luck to him.

However much his staff deny any attempt to repackaging or relaunch the Prince, there has been a clear change in his relations with the media, partly brought about by a new team handling his public relations. Journalists are now briefed regularly by his private secretary, and the Prince has learnt to face the camera, and smile occasionally.

Cmdr Aylard has consistently dismissed suggestions from both the British and Australian media that the Prince's tour, designed to replace his aloof image with a warmer one, was aimed principally at restoring his popularity back home.

As he moves on to New Zealand, the Prince can take comfort that his stock in Australia at least is certainly higher than two weeks ago.

David Kang, the man who attacked the Prince, was allowed bail in Sydney to attend a psychiatric hospital.

Photograph, page 18



Nicholas Parsons, left, and Melvyn Hayes, representing the Dead Comics Society, join Louise Wentworth, 4, who has had a heart transplant operation, to present a £2,300 cheque to the British Heart Foundation in London yesterday

## Chain gang vows to block M11

By TIM JONES  
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

PROTESTERS against the planned £200 million M11 extension in east London say they will resist police and bailiffs with barricades and secret techniques harnessing chains and pipes.

The High Court granted the Transport Department an order on Monday giving squatters seven days to vacate the site peacefully. Emma Must, who spent 14 days in prison for her part in the Twyford Down motorway protest, said: "The barricades are going up and we are practising non-violent civil disobedience techniques." She would not say what they are, but it is understood they involve a complex system of restraints that will hinder removal of protesters.

About 30 squatters are living in three of the houses due for demolition at Cambridge Park, Wanstead. Ms Must said: "There are about 200 people we can call in at 15 minutes' notice who will be prepared to lie down in the face of bulldozers or police vehicles. From midnight on Sunday we will be on red alert."

## KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE  
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

### Short's chances

THE draw for the PCA World Championship quarter-final set for New York from June 6-18 appears to be a favourable one for Nigel Short. He faces the veteran American Boris Gulko, the surprise qualifier from Groningen.

In the past Short has had some impressive victories against Gulko, including the following tactically complex win from the Linares tournament of 1990.

White: Nigel Short  
Black: Boris Gulko  
Linares 1990

1 e4	g5
2 Nf3	Nc6
3 Bb5	Nf6
4 d3	d6
5 c3	Bd7
6 Nbd2	g6
7 Nf1	Bg7
8 Bg5	Ne5
9 Bf4	Bxf4
10 Bxf4	Nc5
11 Qxd4+	Qd7
12 Ne3	O-O
13 O-O	Nd8
14 Kh1	Ng4
15 Qc2	Nf5
16 h3	Ne6
17 h4	exd4
18 d4	f5
19 exd4	Rf6
20 Rf1	Rf6
21 exf5	Qf7
22 Bg3	Sf6
23 Qc2	Sf6
24 Qc4	Sf6
25 Qd3	Sf6
26 Bf5	Nf4
27 Qd2	Nf4
28 g4	Nf4
29 Qg2	Nf4
30 Qf2	Nf4
31 Ng5	Nf4
32 Bf6	Black resigns

Winning Move, page 36

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Maxwell musical 'must go on'

The producer of Maxwell: The Musical, Evan Steadman, has vowed that "the show must go on", despite an application by the Attorney-General, Sir Nicholas Lyell, for a High Court injunction to halt the show on the grounds it will prejudice the future trial of Robert Maxwell's sons, Kevin and Ian.

He said: "In the current script being looked at by the Attorney-General, there is absolutely no direct reference to Kevin and Ian Maxwell or any other defendants currently on trial for fraud."

The musical, which has cost about £1 million to stage, is due to start previewing at the Criterion Theatre in London next Friday. The application will be heard on Monday.

### £1m award for memory loss

Giles Gaisford, 21, was awarded £1 million in an out of court settlement for head injuries after being hit by a car in 1987.

The son of the Archdeacon of Macclesfield, the Rev John Gaisford, he was a brilliant mathematics student who has retained what he knew before the accident but has virtually no recent memory.

### Schoolboys ill

Shropshire Health Authority is investigating how 70 boys aged between 13 and 18 at Shrewsbury School were taken ill with salmonella poisoning after eating food prepared in the school's kitchen.

### Travel bill

Overseas travel by the Foreign Secretary has cost more than £1 million in the last ten months, the Government said. The figure for April 1992 to the end of March last year was £1,569,712.

### Abuse charges

David Thomas, 42, a music teacher at Kingston High School, Hereford, is due to appear before magistrates next week charged with sexually assaulting two girls.

### Payout appeal

Blackpool Health Authority is to appeal against a £13,500 award at the High Court in Manchester to Carol Kewley, 33, who woke up during a Caesarian operation.

### Ram raid

A crowd of about 200 people watched as thieves rammed a car through a Boots' window in Chippenham, Wiltshire, and stole perfume worth thousands of pounds, police said.

### Burglary shock

Rashida Khan, 53, of Slough, Berkshire, collapsed after returning home to find it had been burgled. She was rushed to hospital but later died.

### Rapist jailed

A man aged 56 was jailed for ten years at the Old Bailey for raping his daughter, step-daughter and a family friend over 26 years.

### Fire deaths

Alfie Hughes, 78, and his sister Annie, 75, died in a fire at their home in Marlborough, Wiltshire.



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مركز العمل



## Fuel companies and car makers at odds over cost of benzene safeguards

## Petrol stations face huge bill to cut cancer risk in fumes

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

PETROL companies are facing huge bills to remove cancer-causing vapours from forecourts.

The European Commission is expected to propose next month that petrol stations fit suction devices to pumps to remove fumes containing benzene, a carcinogen, from the air while people are filling up vehicles. The expense might be passed on to drivers.

Tony Fox, of the UK Petroleum Industries Association, said the work could cost £30,000 per filling station. The Government estimates the cost at £15,000 for each filling station.

The petroleum industry claims that fitting devices called large carbon canisters

petrol in Britain but less than 3 per cent in the United States.

Bruce Saunders, senior technical manager at the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, said yesterday that adapting petrol stations would reduce exposure to benzene faster than the canisters. "They would only be fitted to new cars and it takes 10 years or more for Britain's fleet to be replaced," he said.

Simon Wolff, senior lecturer in toxicology at University College London medical school, supported the car companies' claims. He said: "If you want to reduce benzene in the air then the biggest effort should be to reduce it in the fuel. In America, companies have reduced it by adding oxygenates such as methanol to cut by about half the level of aromatics. The petrol companies have effortlessly absorbed the costs."

The wrangle highlights the work of the Environment Department's independent Expert Panel on Air Quality Standards, which this week recommended tight limits on benzene in air. The panel identified car exhaust fumes and petrol stations as key sources of exposure to the chemical, which can cause leukaemia.

The panel will publish further reports on car-related emissions, including ground-level ozone, oxide of nitrogen and particulates from diesel fumes.

Tim Brown, of the National Society for Clean Air, said councils should have powers to help control car pollution. Dutch councils monitored levels and could take legal action against polluting vehicles, including working with police to fine offenders, he said.

The Dutch limits on benzene are set at three parts per billion with a target of 0.51 ppb, compared with the five and then one ppb being recommended in Britain.



The declining health of some British beech trees may be caused by exposure to increased levels of ozone

## Beech trees 'fall victim to exhaust gases'

BY OUR ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH scientists have established a link between car exhaust fumes and changes in the growth patterns of beech trees, which may help to explain an apparent decline in the health of some broadleaf species over recent years.

The scientists have found that a build-up of ground-level ozone, blown across the countryside from car exhausts and factory chimneys, can have a significant impact on the size of leaves and roots of beech trees. It can also alter the time at which the trees bud the following year.

Studies from the United States and Europe have already found that ground-level ozone can damage crops such as tobacco. But this is believed to be the first to discover that the airborne pollutant can also hinder the growth of broadleaf trees.

Ground-level ozone is the result when pollution from car fumes and industrial

airborne emissions reacts with sunlight. It forms smog in cities and can travel great distances, triggering breathing difficulties among the human population. Studies have pinpointed high levels of the pollutant across the British countryside and into Ireland. Only northern Scotland appears to be relatively unaffected.

Mike Ashmore, of the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine in London and Cathy Garrenty, of the Natural Environment Research Council in Swindon, Wiltshire, exposed beech seedlings and saplings at critical phases of their growth to levels of ozone typically found during British summers.

"Both root and leaf weights of well-watered seedlings fell as ozone exposure increased," the scientists said. In seedlings given little water, a reverse effect was seen with the plants growing large

shoots and roots. They tested the plants a year later and found other confusing results. Some of the beeches grew a normal number of leaves but the leaves were smaller than usual. Others, which had been exposed to ozone the previous year but not subsequently, opened their buds much later than normal.

Dr Ashmore said water levels in the soil were clearly important, but that ozone, too, appeared to be playing a role. "We have found significant effects on the growth and development of beech seedlings using realistic exposure patterns and concentrations," he said.

Their work bore out the results of similar studies by the Forestry Commission in Hampshire, which suggested that "ozone levels in southern Britain can affect adversely the performance of young beech trees", he said.

## Credo

## One duchess does not make a flood

Michael J Walsh

WE have been here before. There was the Oxford Movement; there was the case of the Jerusalem bishopric and, more recently, the establishment of the Church of South India. On each occasion, large numbers of conversions to Rome were confidently predicted and, on each occasion, the numbers swelled to a trickle.

There have certainly been conversions because of the decision in the Church of England to ordain women to the priesthood. But one may doubt whether the number going from Canterbury to Rome has been enough to alter the demographic balance of church-going in the British Isles.

It has long been the case that more people attend Sunday worship in Roman Catholic churches than in those of the established Church. The numbers of those "going over to Rome", however, are highly unlikely to match those who, each year simply cease attending Mass.

While all mainline churches in Britain are leaking at the seams, the triumphalism apparent in some RC circles because of the reception into their Church of a duchess and a prominent MP appears curiously out of place. What we need is co-operation rather than competition.

Co-operation among churches means ecumenism and, despite encouraging words from hierarchs on both sides, there is little evidence that it is flourishing.

While Pope John Paul II sits upon the throne of Peter, the likelihood of the Roman Catholic Church following the C of E along the road to the ordination of women is remote indeed. The interest of the Polish Pope is unity with the Orthodox, and though the Orthodox do not share Rome's discipline on everything, on women ministering at the altar they will be unmovable.

Meanwhile, the generally upbeat reports of the Angli-

can-Roman Catholic International Commission (Archiepiscopate) at the two churches' respective headquarters. The Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger has responded that it does not find the faith of the Catholic Church enshrined satisfactorily in Archiepiscopate's documents. That may be a matter of opinion, but there the matter rests for the moment.

One wonders if it signifies. Scratch almost any RC short of professors of divinity, and you are quite likely to find him or her a Pelagian on grace and an Apollinarian on the divinity of Christ. Despite such unrecognised deviance, they happily belong to the Church Catholic. It is belonging which matters for many, if not for most, the minutiae of dogma they leave to others.

It has long been the plea of one senior member of the former RC team in Archie that now theologians have stopped talking — at least for the moment — ordinary members of the different denominations should learn to know each other, and each other's faith. It is my perception that this wish is being realised, but rather more radically than he might approve.

Intercommunion, officially frowned upon by both Anglicans and RCs, has in recent years become far more commonly practised.

I would hazard a guess that, within the Roman Catholic Church, the great majority of Sunday communicants has remained wholly untouched by reports of tensions between the two churches. The faith they practise long ago blurred the distinctions between denominational boundaries. But don't tell the cardinal.

The author is the librarian of Heythrop College, London University

Letters, page 15  
At Your Service  
Weekend, page 6

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Protest widens as jobless join mobs

## Balladur pledge fails to appease fishermen

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS AND JAMES LANDALE IN BRUSSELS

TWO thousand Breton fishermen fought riot police in Rennes yesterday, rampaging through the town centre where Edouard Balladur, the French Prime Minister, promised them he would do everything in his power to protect their industry from further hardship.

The government's pledges did little to quell the fishermen's anger, however, and union leaders said they would continue their strike. M. Balladur looked shaken as he struggled to make his voice heard over the crash of tear-gas grenades, distress rockets and the shouts of the demonstrators 200 yards away. Twenty police and half a dozen protesters were injured in the worst street-fighting in France seen since farmers took to the streets a year ago. Among the injured was the local member of parliament, who was struck on the head by a stone.

Charles Pasqua, the Interior Minister, said professional agitators had joined the fighting.

Farmers, disgruntled hospital workers and the unemployed took part in the Rennes protests. M. Balladur delivered a mild rebuke about the violence, which has included fishermen ransacking markets and shops in Paris and ports and blocking Channel ports. "There must be respect for freedom and public order. Violence has never made anything better," he said.

M. Balladur's team promised more aid on top of the 300 million francs (£34 million) offered on Thursday and said that France had won an emergency deal from Brussels to impose or extend minimum import prices on certain types of fish from outside the European Community.

However, Yannis Paleokrassas, the EC fisheries commissioner, said in Brussels: "The decision was taken to deal with a very serious problem in a member state." He said that the minimum price regime would continue only until next month while a study

was made into the structural crisis affecting the French fish market.

The French government measures yesterday halved the social security taxes fishermen have to pay and experts were appointed to find ways of helping fishermen's families. Tough new checks on imported fish began to hit home, with a shipment of several tonnes being sent back to Algeria from Marseilles airport because of poor labelling.

M. Balladur's increasingly desperate moves to appease the fishermen reflect his policy since taking office last March of yielding in the face of industrial trouble. Last autumn, the government pushed to near breaking point to win concessions for its farmers in the Gatt world trade negotiations and it caved in to a violent strike by ground workers at Air France. Critics say M. Balladur is storing up big problems as more disgruntled sectors sense the possibility of an easy victory.



Elisabeth Rehn, the Finnish presidential candidate, laughing during a press conference in Helsinki yesterday. The final round of the presidential elections, in which Finns will choose between Ms Rehn, the Defence Minister, and Martti Ahtisaari, a veteran

UN diplomat, will be held tomorrow. Polls indicate that Ms Rehn, 53, of the Swedish People's Party, a member of the ruling centre-right coalition, and Mr Ahtisaari, 56, of the opposition Social Democrats, are running neck and neck. (Reuters)

## Tycoon looks to Northern League for allies

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

SILVIO Berlusconi, Italy's larger-than-life, self-made media mogul, is the favourite to become the next Italian Prime Minister, but he desperately needs political allies to form a credible government.

Signor Berlusconi, one of the few of the super-rich in the establishment who has climbed to the top through his own efforts, was negotiating yesterday with the devolutionist (northern) Lombardy League over the terms for joining the anti-Communist crusade he has launched as a key candidate in the March 27 general election. The owner of three influential television stations, the declining AC Milan football club, and the now little-read *Il Giornale*, he claims that millions of housewives and entrepreneurs belong to his constellation of Forza Italia political clubs that his lieutenants set up last month. But observers say the cryptic if not sinister clubs have almost no voluntary members and are fictitious.

Right-wing leaders such as Signor Berlusconi are flexing their muscles in the Byzantine horsetrading under way as the start of the campaign on Monday approaches. He is jockeying for position with seasoned, if lacklustre, rivals such as Mario Segni, the former Christian Democrat MP who is the main inspiration behind Italy's electoral reform referendum, and Giancarlo Fini, the street-fighting, football-playing neo-Fascist leader.

According to a poll by the DOXA market research organisation, Signor Berlusconi, 57, has moved into the lead as the man most favoured to be the next Prime Minister, outstripping even Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, the present head of government and former central bank governor. Italy watchers say the outcome of the contest remains wide open and will be determined by dirty tricks, chicanery and the will of Italians determined to replace their corrupt, Mafia-ridden political class discredited by the two-year-old *rangnotopoli* (bribe city) scandal. Signor Berlusconi appears to have everything — except the certainty that most Italians would like to see him at the head of a government.



Berlusconi: moved ahead in the polls

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### US 'toned down' level of genocide in Bosnia

Washington: American embarrassment over Bosnia deepened yesterday with the leak of a paper by a State Department Yugoslav expert which accuses the Clinton Administration of minimising the "genocide" there to lessen the pressure for US intervention (Martin Fletcher writes).

The leak came out as the United Nations Security Council gave Croatia two weeks to start pulling out its estimated 5,000 troops from Bosnia-Herzegovina or face possible sanctions.

The leaked paper quotes top State Department officials as saying that military intervention was just too risky politically because failure would "destroy the Clinton presidency". Compounding the Administration's acute discomfort, the leak has occurred at the very moment that America is being pressed hard by its European allies to abandon its hands-off approach to the conflict. The paper was written by Richard Johnson, head of the Yugoslav desk from 1990 to 1992.

### Taxing talks

Tokyo: Leaders of Japan's ruling coalition agreed to revoke a controversial plan unveiled by Morihiro Hosokawa, the Prime Minister, to introduce a 7 per cent "national welfare tax" and begin a fresh round of negotiations over the weekend.

### Shamir's secret

Jerusalem: Yitzhak Shamir, the former Israeli Prime Minister, said in an interview published here that he met King Hussein of Jordan secretly at one of his homes in England in the summer of 1987 to discuss Middle East peace. (Reuters)

### Cyprus package

Nicosia: Greek and Turkish-Cypriot leaders accepted a package of UN confidence-building measures, creating a "unique" chance for progress toward ending the island's division. Robert Lamb, the US special envoy, said. (AFP)

### King chosen

Kuala Lumpur: Sultan Tuanku Jaafar Abdul Rahman, 71, a former Malaysian diplomat and British-trained lawyer, was chosen by the nine Malaysian sultans as the country's tenth king. They take it in turn as king. (Reuters)

### Last orders

Athens: Greece is to introduce legislation compelling discotheques and bouzouki bars to shut by 3am at the latest in an attempt to cut down on violent crime in the capital. Bar owners who flout the new rules risk losing their licences.

### Hungarian vote

Budapest: Hungary's general election will be held on May 8, President Goncz said. Analysts say it might produce a coalition. The ruling Hungarian Democratic Forum has seen its popularity plummet as unemployment has risen.

### Hard hats

Moscow: Former Soviet leaders, fearing assassination, wore big fur hats lined with steel when attending military parades in Red Square. The *Segodnya* newspaper said the helmet factory is now offering the hats to Russians who fear attacks from gangsters. (AP)

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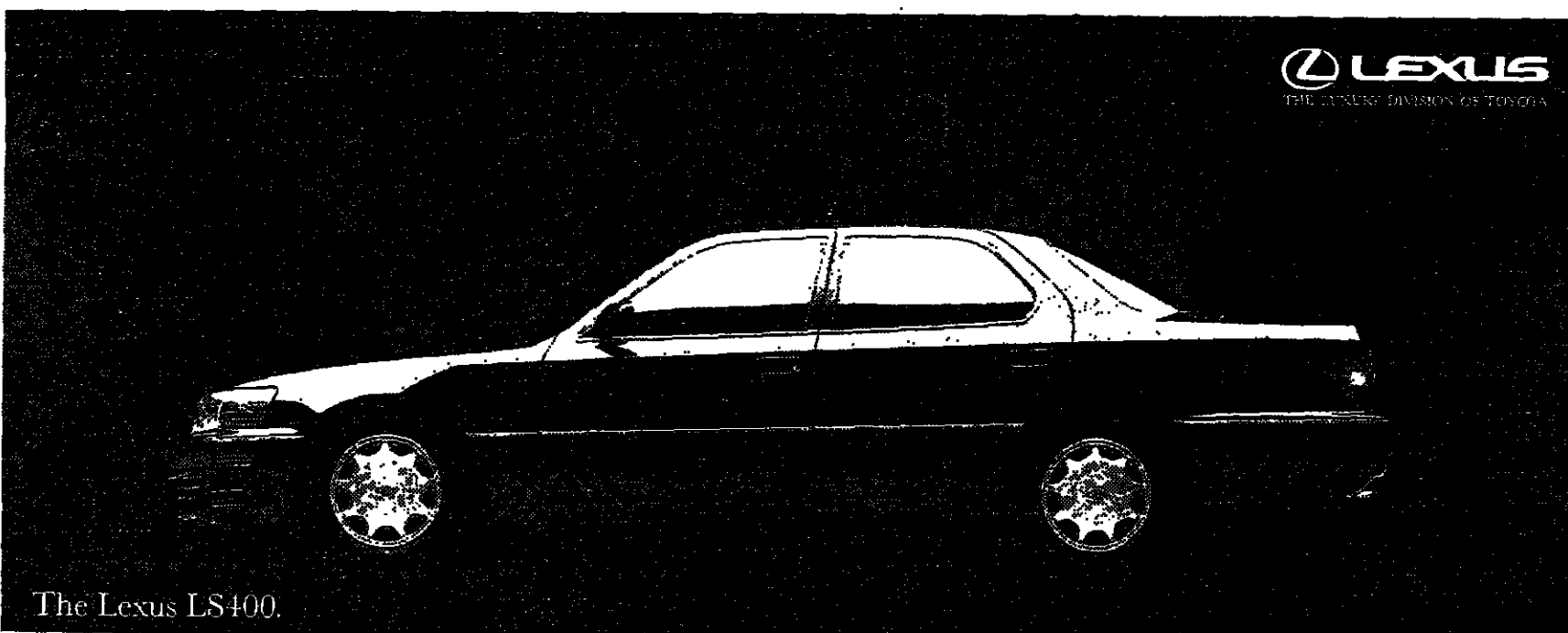
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NEWS IN BRIEF  
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# Singapore sceptics cast doubt over the Raffles legend

FROM JAMES PRINGLE  
IN SINGAPORE

JUST a quarter of a century ago, down at Singapore's Boat Quay, traders would watch as sweating coolies unloaded goods from the bumboats that had brought them in from ships at anchor in the roads. They would then work out their accounts on an abacus.

It would have been a sight not altogether unfamiliar to the man hitherto regarded as the founder of Singapore, Sir Stamford Raffles, when he arrived in the swampy island in 1819. Nowadays Singapore has the most efficient container port in the world, with record turnaround times; calculations these days are computerised. And Boat Quay is a yuppie hangout with Swiss, Italian, French and Chinese restaurants.

The city is marking the 175th anniversary of the first landing by Raffles, a former clerk with the East India Company, and one would have to admit that the old British merchant-adventurer would be pleased how it all turned out — despite historical misadventure such as the ignominious 1942 British surrender of Singapore to Japan.

"Raffles did set out to build a commercial entrepôt here," said one longtime Singapore resident. "It succeeded — beyond his wildest dreams."

Nowadays Singapore's 2.7 million citizens enjoy the highest standard of living in Asia and Japan, despite the island's lack of natural resources. The squeaky-clean city-state thrives on trade, shipping, banking, tourism and light industry.

Most of that success stems from 1965 the year Singapore became a republic and was under the stewardship of Lee Kuan Yew, now the Senior Minister. That strict patriarch stepped aside from the role of Prime Minister in 1990 but his glowering presence is still strongly felt in the background. His People's Action Party has ruled the island with a firm grip since 1959.

Singapore pays a price for its success: the island has been dubbed a nanny state.

■ Singapore is celebrating 175 years since Sir Stamford Raffles' landing. Some experts believe that history has lionised the wrong man as the founding father of Lion City

and it is run like a well-ordered nursery. The government's paternalistic attitude has prompted mass campaigns to stop spitting, smoking and chewing gum, and to encourage the flushing of public toilets. Singapore's finest citizens mount operations against litterbugs the way other countries' police launch them against dope traffickers.

However, all this order has not made Singaporeans better people. They are considered pushy and rude in the region. Singaporeans admit they suffer from *kiasu* in the local Chinese dialect, the "fear of losing out".



Raffles: returned to Singapore in 1823

Just as the 175th anniversary of modern Singapore is being celebrated, doubts are growing over whether Raffles deserves all the credit as founding father. The commemorative exhibition, which opened on January 30 — the date in 1819 that Raffles landed and decided this was the place he needed to start a trading station and ensure Britain's pre-eminence east of Suez — is the treaty Raffles

signed with a local Malay chief of Singapore, or Lion City, on February 6, 1819.

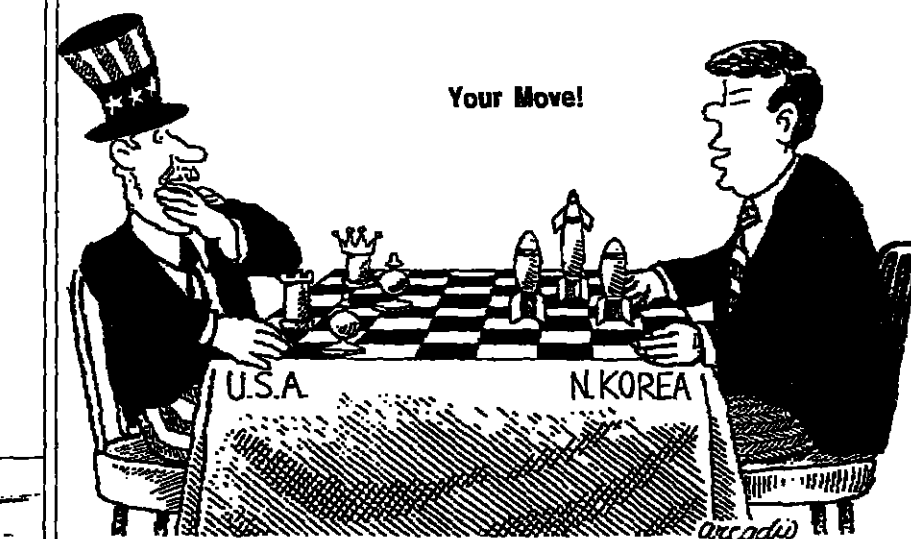
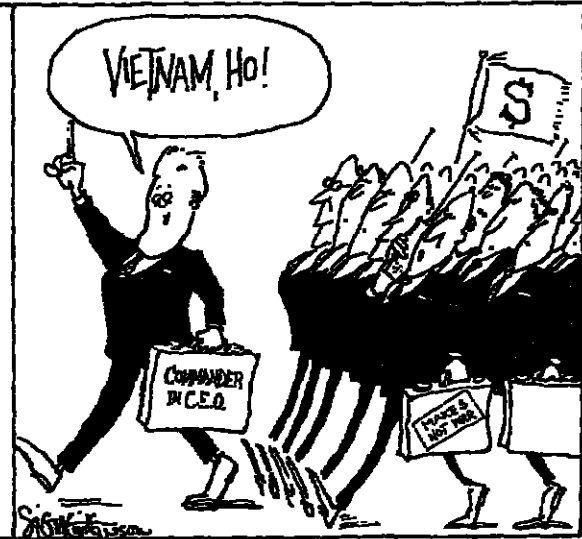
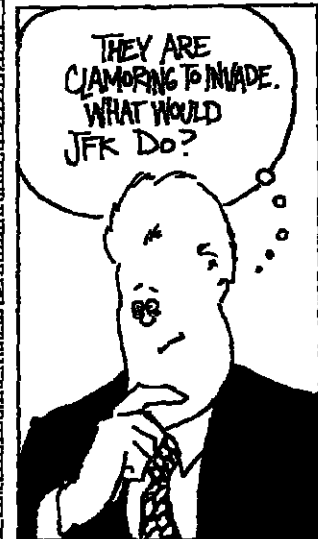
However, Ernest Chew, an associate professor at the National University of Singapore, contends that it was John Crawfurd, the second British resident of Singapore, who actually acquired the island for Britain with a treaty signed in 1824.

All that Raffles did, according to the professor, was to obtain the right to establish an East India Company trading post. Sovereignty of the island was still in the hands of the local Malay chief with whom Raffles signed the trading deal. Raffles, who was then Lieutenant-Governor of Bencoolen in Western Sumatra, returned in 1823 to assert administrative control over Singapore.

George Yeo, Singapore's present Minister of Information and the Arts, said in a speech at the opening of the exhibition that Raffles was "indefatigable and indomitable", and he noted that the great British imperialist "would have thought the idea of Singapore as an independent nation an absurdity". However, he said, "Raffles intended Singapore to be larger than its physical size and so it has always been and so it should always be."

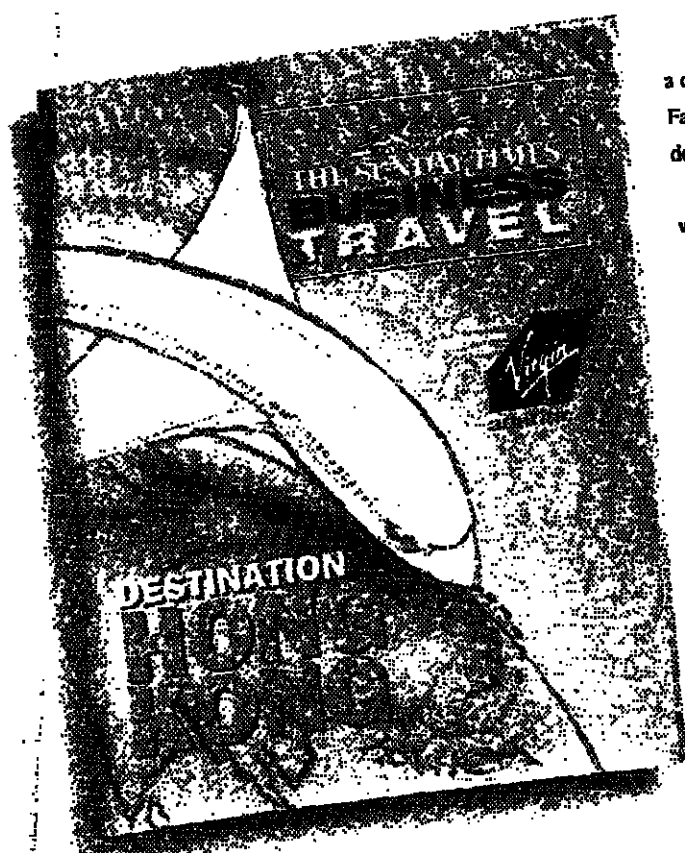
Mr Lee and his successors have maintained such a firm grip on Singapore that the island is held up as a role model inside two of the regional Communist states, China and Vietnam. "Singapore is wrapped up very tightly politically," said one senior foreign diplomat here, who like most foreign envoys, expresses a grudging admiration for the city-state. "Economically, it's a kind of 'market-Leninism' with the government directing a highly successful economy. But Raffles himself would have been impressed."

## THE WORLD IN CARTOONS



Clockwise from top left: the US by Heng (Liane Zaöbe, Singapore); Bosnia (Aislin, Montreal Gazette); Vietnam (Signe, Philadelphia Daily News); North Korea (Arcadio, La Nación, Costa Rica); Israel (Hanel, Frankfurter Allgemeine); Russia (Cherepanov, Krokodil, Moscow)

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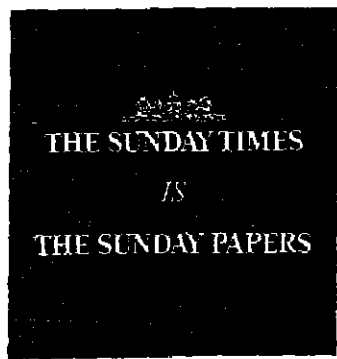
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Whites told they betray their children by keeping silent over right-wing violence

# Mandela accuses de Klerk of being pathetic weakling

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN IN KROONSTAD, ORANGE FREE STATE

DISMISSING President de Klerk and his National Party as "a pathetic collection of weaklings", Nelson Mandela, the president of the African National Congress, yesterday warned the white community that it was betraying its children by keeping silent about white right-wing violence.

Taking his presidential-style campaign to the Orange Free State, Mr Mandela told a handful of white and black business people at a breakfast meeting in Sasolburg that blacks were being killed by whites, by the security forces and by other black groups, and he said: "The whites in this country are totally silent. The whites have an obligation to stand up and join us publicly in saying that we want to build peace."

Hope in the future was being destroyed by the emigration of skills and because overseas investment was being discouraged by instability and right-wing threats of civil war.

Mr Mandela declared: "You must understand that when that happens, it is not only blacks who are going to die. Both blacks and whites are going to die. You are betraying your children, your communities, your future by keeping quiet in the light of these bombs against the ANC."

Rightwingers have been blamed for a series of recent bomb blasts in the Orange Free State and in the western and northern Transvaal. Targets have been railway lines, power pylons and recently offices belonging to the ANC and its allies. Nobody has been killed, although a few people have been injured. Nobody has been arrested.

Five more bombs exploded overnight, three in the western Transvaal, one in Klerksdorp and one in Harrismith, in the Orange Free State. One of the western Transvaal bombs ex-

ploded at the farm of Jan Serfontein, a white farmer and ANC member. During Mr Mandela's campaign last week, Mr Serfontein allowed a training college he runs to be used for a meeting.

Mr Mandela yesterday visited an ANC office which was recently bombed in Bothaville, not far from here.

The ANC president called on whites, especially Afrikaners, to isolate the right wing, and prevent South Africa from becoming a Bosnia or a Somalia. It was no use relying on the government to do so.

"You have a lame-duck government led by a lame-duck President, who is intimidated by the right wing," he said. Mr Mandela also recalled the bomb attacks carried out by the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), against Sasolburg itself. Sasol, a state company, owns a huge refinery around which the town was built. The refinery was developed to extract oil products from coal and so avoid sanctions on imported crude. "My visit is



De Klerk: seen to lead a lame-duck government

significant," Mr Mandela said, speaking in the oil company's sports club, "in view of the activities of Umkhonto we Sizwe and Sasol."

Mr Mandela did have a number of words of comfort for the business community, however. Calling on businessmen to trust the ANC, he assured them that they were needed to create jobs and that they would be allowed to make profits.

He also promised that, despite the appalling treatment he and his colleagues had suffered, they were not out for vengeance. "We believe in a multiparty state," he said.

At various stops during the day, despite saying he did not wish to waste his time talking about the National Party congress that has just ended, Mr Mandela was particularly sharp in his remarks about Mr de Klerk's attempts to woo black voters.

"They are a pathetic collection of weaklings unable to reconcile themselves with the fate of extinction which stares them in the face," The ANC leader insisted that the Nationalists have "never served the masses of the people of South Africa. They only know how to serve the white community."

Speaking to an excited crowd in a football stadium at Zamdela, a nearby township overshadowed by the smoking chimneys and flame tower of the refinery, Mr Mandela said that people were now shunning the National Party "like lepers".

"They are a racist party. They want the whites to be on top," he said. Mr Mandela claimed that the ANC had a history of more than 80 years fighting racial discrimination, while the National Party was practising the worst form of discrimination.

"They worship God. They are Christians," he said derisively. "They have been killing



Nelson Mandela dancing while campaigning in Sasolburg, Orange Free State, where he asked whites to build peace

innocent people in the name of God," Mr Mandela strode around the stadium's perimeter fence, chatting to children and an 89-year-old veteran of the freedom struggle, and punching the air with his clenched-fist salute. Similar walkabouts were features of his later visits to Kroonstad and Welkom.

Before he arrived in

Kroonstad, 30 people were injured when the crowd began dancing on the roof of a pavilion that collapsed. The remaining dancers continued on the undamaged portion. Amid deafening cheers, a group of women from the ANC Women's League presented him with a rocking-chair and warm blanket, despite the already oppressive

heat under a slate-grey sky. Then he danced a little, and swayed to the music with Razia Hansa, 22, a beautician from Vereeniging, on the other side of the Vaal river.

He scoffed that the National Party "turns to blacks to say, 'We want you to join our party, because they have been abandoned by whites'".

The election campaign had already turned into a vicious war of words, with Mr de Klerk accusing the ANC of not knowing what it was talking about, and of being in the hands of the red peril. Mr Mandela showed, yesterday that he can give as good as he gets. As President de Klerk told television viewers the previous night: "In an election, politics is not for sissies."

## Drug pirates bring deathly fear to Caribbean paradise

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

PIRACY and drug trafficking pose a growing threat to tourists and yachtsmen who once regarded the Caribbean waters as a place to get away from it all, say American and European officials who monitor the area.

Residents of the twin-island Caribbean nation of Antigua and Barbuda, visited by thousands of British tourists every year, are shocked by the death of two English sailors and an American couple, who were found killed last week, and suspect that drug traffickers may have been involved. Although Scotland Yard detectives have not discovered the motive for the killings, "everyone on the island believes it had something to do with drugs", said Tim Hector, a news-

paper editor in Antigua whose wife was murdered by a drug addict in 1989. "Sadly we have become a popular destination for the traffickers."

Drug-running routes criss-cross the Caribbean as the traffickers shift their operations and adapt their modes of transport in a battle to outwit the authorities. "It's crazy. As soon as we are successful in one area they move elsewhere," an anti-drug official said.

The eastern Caribbean islands of Antigua, Anguilla and St Martin have in recent years become a "preferred area" for cocaine smugglers on routes from Colombia to America and Europe, said William Mitchell, the American Drug Enforcement Administration chief in

■ The murders of four people on a luxury yacht have tarnished the image of a carefree holiday destination. Cocaine gangs are using the area as a transit zone for the US and European markets

Puerto Rico. Last year his agency broke up a drug operation involving Colombian cocaine which was "air-dropped" off the coast of Antigua in waterproof "bales". In a series of raids, agents seized a tonne of cocaine and arrested 25 suspects.

Traffickers normally load the cocaine into waiting "stealth boats" — fast, low-riding craft that avoid radar detection — and carry the drugs to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, from where they are taken to America. "We are

seeing more and more cocaine air-dropped from small planes," said Elliott Richardson, the Anguilla police commissioner. "Sometimes our local fishermen pick it out of the sea and bring it to us."

Drugs are also transported through the area to Britain. One man working for an Antigua-based drug smuggler was recently arrested as he entered the UK with 660b of cocaine after he had carried it by plane from St Martin to Paris, and on to Dover. In November 1992

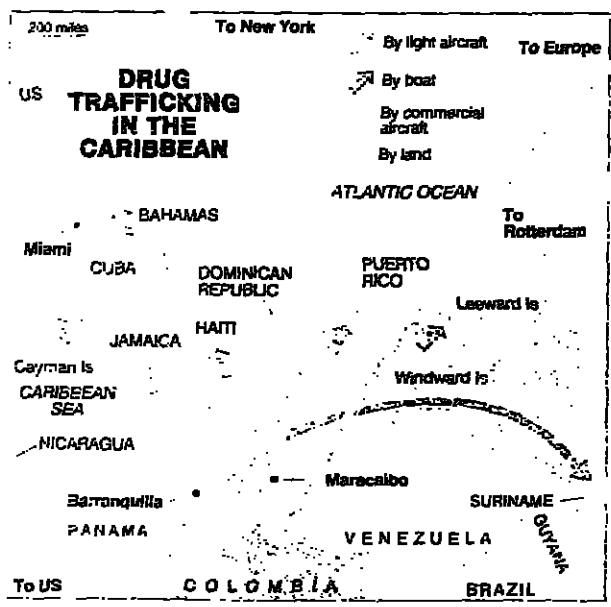
more than a tonne of cocaine was seized on a ship moored on the Thames which had sailed from the Dutch island of Aruba off the coast of Venezuela.

Drug-running has also increased in the western Caribbean. Last year a record two tonnes of marijuana was seized in the British Cayman Islands, according to Trevor Cutts, the drugs squad superintendent. He said that drugs arrive in the islands from Honduras and Jamaica and are transported in smaller loads to Florida. He said: "It's like a giant warehouse for the United States."

He explained that an American naval blockade of Haiti, designed to enforce an international embargo and prevent an exodus of boat people, may be forcing more drugs towards the Caymans, due to extra patrols of US Coast Guard

and navy vessels off the Haitian coast. Piracy of boats in the Caribbean is an added anxiety of sailors. "Many carry guns because of the fear of piracy," Mr Mitchell said. "There's still a certain amount of piracy. I'm not talking about Jolly Roger, and the patch over the eye. It's almost like carjacking. They don't take your car or your boat, but they take everything of value."

Local businessmen are worried that piracy and drug trafficking could hurt the Caribbean tourism industry, which accounts for a higher percentage of national income than in any other region of the world. In Antigua there are fears that the murders last week might interfere with the island's sailing regatta in April, the Caribbean's top racing event which attracts some of the world's finest yachts.



## Yacht owners revel in rum and romance

BY NICHOLAS WAPSHOTT

"THEM that die'll be the lucky ones," growled a pirate in the closing chapter of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, published in 1883. Piracy is still dealing in death in the Caribbean.

The fate of the four found bound, gagged and savagely murdered on the *Computacenter Challenger* yacht last week was a chilling reminder that the islands and seascape that inspired tales of Long John Silver still boast vicious pirates. The victims today are often the floating community of British, American and Canadian owners of small yachts who ferry tourists around the Caribbean.

The marina on Tortola Island is crammed with yachts for chartering, mostly bought on a lease-back ar-

rangement by adventurous married couples who wish to shelter some windfall earnings from the Inland Revenue, or to get away from it all. Others, like the *Challenger*, are privately owned and used for "corporate entertaining". The crewing couples share the work with the husband as skipper and his wife as cook.

One such is Michael and Wendy Fairly, with whom I recently spent a week sailing and snorkeling around the British Virgin Islands. They sold their hotel in the North West of England and, having toured Europe in a camper-van, decided to build a yacht and charter it in the Caribbean themselves. They remain outsiders in the close-knit BVI community, which limits the ownership of land to the small indigenous population. The yacht owners form a small, friendly,

itinerant community of capital-rich if cash-poor incomers, content to mix solely with each other over rum punches in remote spots where they take clients to dive and water-ski. They are hedonistic people, happily passing a quiet period of their life, much like the white residents in colonial Africa or India.

It is ironic in the light of the brutal murders that the charter yacht people earn much of their living from the memory of pirates. They proudly point out Dead Chest, the barrel-shaped island where 15 mutineers were left to starve to death. The "Fifteen men on a dead man's chest" inspired Stevenson to invent the late Victorian, romantic view of piracy that has turned the Caribbean into an enormous aquatic theme park.

On the 75th anniversary of Steven-

son's death, the silhouette of Long John Silver telling yarns to Jim Hawkins appeared on the BVI five-cents postage stamp and proved so successful that a further set was issued featuring real pirates — including the infamous Henry Morgan, Edward Teach, better known as Blackbeard, and the woman pirate Mary Read. Many yachts, mostly those owned by Americans and chartered to affluent New Yorkers, happily sport a Jolly Roger flown at the top of the main mast.

But today's pirates are unlike the 18th-century buccaners who took part in the colonial wars for ownership of the Caribbean islands, now they mostly feed upon the illicit traffic in cocaine between South America and Florida or in refugees smuggled from Cuba and Haiti into the US.

## Punks go on parade to play toughest of 'girrls'

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

WOMEN come and go all day through an upstairs card room in the Hollywood Athletic Club: scores of the young and not-so-young who are hoping to play the most frightening of modern feminist heroines.

Her head is line-tenth shaved. She carries a gun and a barbed baseball bat. She wears hotpants and bovine boots, is loudmouthed, sexually intimidating, tattooed and pierced in most unusual places. She started life as the star of a British cartoon strip. Now Rachel Talalay, the director of the latest in the series of *Nightmare on Elm Street* films, wants to make her flesh and blood. She is just-punk personified. She is Tank Girl.

The search for the perfect 21st-century female rebel began on Thursday with an open casting call. Hopefuls stretched down Sunset Boulevard, preening mobtans and adjusting leather corsets while rehearsing two pages of deeply cynical script.

Not everyone looked the part already. "If they wanted me to, I'd shave my head and stick a ring in my nose," said Samantha Mudd, 25, who brought along her shoulder-length brown hair. "You've just got to go with your talent and hope they see you can be a tough punk chick."

The resurgent Hollywood punk scene, much of which turned out to audition, likes to think of Tank Girl as a "girrrl" — an American adaptation of the classic British punkette. Girrrls, says Lorie Enfinger, 22, tend to wear short skirts and 6-hole Dr Martens and carry toy lunch boxes. "It's a way to get in touch with your femininity and yet be really angry about violence against women."

Tank Girl will have to dole out a certain amount of violence against men. "She knows how to look after herself," says Talalay, who envisages the film as *Mad Max* meets *Thelma and Louise*. She is also auditioning in London, and has to specific accent in mind for Tank Girl.

Debra Casey, 30, is glad to hear it. She has halan inch of surgical steel through her tongue and limited respect for British punks. "I'm an educated adult who has a job. They can live off the government and don't have to take responsibility for how they act. I'm not saying I don't want to party with them, but God, I wish they would slow down."

Tank Girl was conceived five years ago by Jim Hewlett and Alan Martin, both Worthing college students, to be "as insulting and horrid about people and things we don't like as possible," said Hewlett. She lives in a tank, apparently in the Australian Outback, and has a boy friend who is half-man, half-kangaroo, and has won a cult following with students.



Tank Girl: post-punk personified and armed

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Punks go  
in parade  
to play  
toughest  
of 'girrrls'

## Republicans yearn for good old days while Ron and Margaret fête each other as the truly greats

### Reagan hits at Clinton for stealing his ideology

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

BARONESS Thatcher was guest of honour at a huge Republican gala marking Ronald Reagan's 83rd birthday. For a few glittery hours it felt just like the good old days when the Republicans were still a power in the land and Britain and America were inseparable.

Elsewhere in Washington the talk was of the Anglo-American bust-up over Gerry Adams, but inside the capital's magnificent National Building Museum the Union Jack was flying alongside the Stars and Stripes on Thursday night and 2,500 fat cats stood for the British and American national anthems.

Lady Thatcher recalled how "Ron" had "stood face to face with the Evil Empire" and called him "truly great". Mr Reagan hailed "Margaret" as "one of the giants of our century... a staunch ally, my political soulmate, a great visionary and a dear, dear friend".

It is five years since the

Gipper rode off into the sunset, and he now looks distinctly dodder, but his speech was still vintage Reagan, perfectly timed and flawlessly delivered. "As our plane headed towards the airport I looked down on the White House and it still looked just the same — the South Lawn, the Rose Garden... David Gergen [Reagan's former Communications Director] he quipped as Nancy looked on adoringly. "I looked over a couple of blocks and there was the Internal Revenue Service — bigger than I ever remembered it."

Mr Reagan announced that he would not run again in 1996. However, he continued: "I have not ruled out the possibility of running in the year 2000."

But there was an anger below the surface. He was "awfully tired of the whining voices from the White House", he said. The Democrats were "doing everything in their power to rewrite history". Mr Reagan protested. Political revisionists were recasting the 1980s as "a decade of greed and neglect... filled with suffering and despair". But, he said, "you and I know better — we were there".

He said: "We cut taxes and freed the people from the shackles of too much government. The economy burst loose in the longest peacetime expansion ever. We brought America back... bigger and better than ever." The US, with Lady Thatcher's help, "won the Cold War and the Berlin Wall came tumbling down. History will record our era as one of peace and global prosperity. In the end it all comes down to leadership, and that is what this country is looking for now." George Bush, incidentally, has been



Nostalgia reigned as Ronald Reagan greeted guest of honour Baroness Thatcher at a gala to celebrate the former President's 83rd birthday

unofficially declared a Republican non-person and was not mentioned once.

In a town where the Democrats now rule supreme, the night's dominant themes were nostalgia and defiance. The event also raised \$5 million (£3.35 million) for Republican coffers, but nothing could disguise the fact that the Grand Old Party is not nearly as grand as it was. The Republicans may still have money, but after Mr Bush's defeat and the Soviet collapse they have yet to unite behind a single leader or ideology. Their best weapon in Washington is the filibuster, but that can just as easily blow up in their faces. And as Mr Reagan put it,

President Clinton has committed "grand larceny — the intellectual theft of ideas you and I recognise as our own".

In an interview with *The Times* in December, Haley Barbour, the party chairman, predicted solid gains in this November's congressional elections because they would be fought on the Republican bedrock issues of crime and taxes. But one by one Mr Clinton has appropriated these themes as his rightward lurch and rise in the polls continue. He has become so tough on crime that, in a ludicrous attempt to appear still tougher, Newt Gingrich, the Republican Whip, last month proposed turning empty military bases into

stockaded detention centres. Mr Clinton has pledged to "end welfare as we know it". He extolled family values — without apparent irony — in his State of the Union speech, a subject the Republicans hardly dared resurrect since the religious right hijacked their disastrous 1992 convention. On Thursday, he announced a crackdown on illegal immigration.

In the 1980s, Republicans won elections simply by denouncing the Democrats as tax-and-spend liberals who were soft on defence. Mr Clinton did raise taxes, but the economy is booming, the deficit is tumbling and on Monday he will unveil what he calls "one of the toughest

budgets ever presented". It also "draws the line against further defence cuts".

As a Republican pollster remarked: "It's hard to land a punch when your opponent has his arms wrapped round you."

William Bennett, formerly Mr Bush's Education Secretary and drugs tsar, recently told *Newsweek* in a burst of candour: "We once were found and now we're lost. If somebody takes your ideas, begins to sound like you and tries to implement them, the only possible response is to say, 'This is a very good thing. Well done.'"

Mr Clinton's most obvious Achilles' heel is his hugely expensive and bureaucratic

health care plan, which the Republicans could easily portray as a left-wing assault on individual liberties. Instead, unable to unite behind a plan of their own, they prefer to argue that there is no health care crisis.

An international drama — Russia? North Korea? — could yet trip Mr Clinton up, but otherwise few Americans are much concerned about Mr Clinton's foreign policy shortcomings. The Republicans hope that he will be undone by the Whitewater investigation, but on that score the news is also mixed. The next election is in 1996, but the special prosecutor has just signed a three-year lease for his Little Rock office.

### Lawyer 'blocked suicide enquiry'

FROM WOLFGANG MUNCHAU IN WASHINGTON

POLICE enquiring into the Whitewater affair have alleged that the President's most senior lawyer obstructed the investigation into the suicide last July by Vince Foster, the deputy White House counsel who handled Bill and Hillary Clinton's files on investment in the land development firm they partly owned.

In another move, Jim Leach, a senior Republican on the House of Representatives banking committee, has presented evidence that funds were paid from the accounts of a now bankrupt Arkansas savings and loan bank to repay partially the Clintons' personal debts in 1985. This supports a key allegation in the affair, that Mr Clinton may have received funds paid by taxpayers as part of the savings and loan bail-out.

The latest allegations are likely to heighten speculation of a cover-up, and suggest that there existed something worthwhile covering up.

In an unpublished report leaked to *The New York Times*, the police force investigating Foster's suicide claims that Bernard Nussbaum, the White House counsel, interfered with the enquiry by denying them early access to Foster's office and by insisting that White House lawyers be present during interviews with staff.

The police say that these actions discouraged a frank exchange of views about the motives behind Foster's decision to take his own life. They say that, during a search of Foster's office two days after his suicide, Mr Nussbaum denied investigators access to several files, including a newspaper clipping and details of the Clintons' property investments. Mr Nussbaum had conducted his first search of Foster's office immediately after the suicide, along with two aides. The report did not find any evidence of foul play.

## Hanoi toasts end of trade war with new year firecrackers and beer

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN HANOI

TO THE sound of firecrackers, 400 laughing and joking Americans and Vietnamese toasted the end of the United States trade embargo last night beside Hanoi's West Lake. The "end of embargo bash" was held under skies that a quarter of a century ago echoed to the sounds of attacking American aircraft and exploding bombs. Even the secret police seemed content.

"When I was a little girl, I heard the American planes come over and drop bombs and I would run with my mother to the dug-out shelter outside our house," said Vu

Kim Thanh, 28, who now works for an American employer at Vatio, an American-Vietnamese joint venture trading company.

"We were so afraid of the Americans then, but with the embargo over we can now start afresh. Everyone in Vietnam is happy with this, because this should mean more jobs," James Rockwell, the managing director of Vatio, who hosted the party at which the American and Vietnamese flags flew side by side and beer flowed, said: "It has been a long, long time — the war really ended 20 years

ago, but in fact it dragged on until just 12 hours ago."

He said he believed the 19-year long embargo has been a deterrent to finding 2,238 Americans still unaccounted for in the war.

"The Vietnamese government has nothing left to say," Mr Rockwell said. "They told us everything they knew a long time ago. The next step is getting Americans in on the ground and the spectre of governments out of the way."

The mood on Hanoi's streets last night was buoyant, and there were coloured lights, peach blossoms and

exploding firecrackers everywhere but, far from being directly linked to the lifting of the embargo, it was staged to celebrate Tet or the Vietnamese lunar new year.

Within hours of the end of the embargo, a cola war erupted. PepsiCo fired the first shot, mounting a photograph of hundreds of people looking at a giant Pepsi can placed on a Ho Chi Minh City square. Coca-Cola is flying in a 30ft inflatable Coke bottle for a party at the city's concert hall today.

Leading article, page 15

## Black Muslim defends his sacked aide

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

THE animosity between black and Jewish Americans has flared up again after Louis Farrakhan, the head of the Muslim group Nation of Islam, denounced one of his aides for an anti-Semitic speech but then defended the "truth" of the man's remarks. Mr

Farrakhan said Khalid Abdul Muhammad had made "reputable" and "mean-spirited" comments during a speech in New Jersey last November when he described Jews as "bloodsuckers of the black nation", called the Pope a "no-good cracker", and urged

black South Africans to kill whites. However, the controversial leader's remarks fell some way short of an outright condemnation.

In particular Mr Farrakhan, who has often been accused of anti-Semitism, claimed that Mr Muhammad was correct when he said that three-quarters of Southern slaves before the civil war belonged to Jews, an assertion denied by most historians.

"While I stand by the truths he spoke," said Mr Farrakhan, who dismissed Mr Muhammad as national assistant, "I must condemn in the

strongest terms the manner in which those truths were represented."

America's Jewish community has been incensed by Mr Farrakhan's salvo. "It was the same old bone-chilling hate, delivered with a smile," said David Harris, of the American Jewish Committee.

Many prominent blacks have distanced themselves. "I'm confused," said Roy Innis, National Chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality. "If Minister Farrakhan believes that Khalid Muhammad was telling the truth, why did he fire him?"

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AAD 134



Many women MPs come from élite political families, says Sarah Baxter, while others face an unfair gender barrier

## Should we offer the lady a seat?

Never mind the sex and sleaze of recent months. Family values do exist in the House of Commons. Indeed it is hard to imagine a more family-oriented institution. Sons have followed fathers into the chamber for generations. If you are a Brooke, a Channon, a Churchill or a Hogg, politics is in the blood. One of the best-kept secrets in the House, however, is the number of women MPs with family ties at Westminster.

When Lady Astor took her seat in 1919, she did not fit the suffragettes' picture of the first to do so. She was too rich, too aristocratic and too American; and, what is more, she inherited her seat from her husband. On her arrival, she found that "Men whom I had known for years would not speak to me if they passed me in the corridor." But her husband had unexpectedly become a peer, and it was with his approval that she kept his seat in the family. It helped to win men's consent for her unorthodox status.

Lady Astor was joined two years later by the widow of an MP, Margaret Winterton, who did not

utter a word in public during her by-election campaign, out of respect for her late husband. The next woman to arrive, Mabel Hillon Philipson, was also a loyal wife. She stepped into the breach after her husband had been unseated because of fraudulent practices by his agent.

It is all ancient history, you might suppose. Not a bit of it. The dynasties are only difficult to spot because women's names often change. As many as one in four women MPs have Westminster ancestors and relatives. They are the wives, daughters, sisters and nieces of other MPs; and, but for family encouragement and example, they might never have made it.

First, the wives. Conservative MP Ann Winterton's seat was carved out of her husband's constituency when his population grew too big. Today, the Wintertons are a formidable if rebellious parliament-

tary couple. Labour's Llin Golding took over from her husband in Newcastle-under-Lyme after he was forced to resign his seat on becoming general-secretary of a union. She is also the daughter of the former MP, Ness Edwards, and one of the most determined opponents in the Labour Party of quotas for women candidates. She believes, unselfconsciously, that women should get into Parliament on their own merit.

Labour's Irene Adams won the Paisley North by-election in 1990 after the death of her husband, so upholding the Winterton tradition. Virginia Bottomley entered parliament nearly a decade after Peter Gwyneth Durnwoode (1966) and Bridget Prentice (1972) were elected in the same year as their husbands. Clive Short's experience was particularly poignant: she won her seat in 1983 while her husband, the late Alex Lyon, lost his.

Then there are the daughters. In addition to Llin Golding, there are the Labour MP Hilary Armstrong, who stepped into her father's seat in Durham North West on his retirement; Lady Olga Maitland, the daughter of the 17th Earl of Lauderdale (former Tory MP Patrick Maitland); and Estelle Morris, the daughter of Charles and niece of Alf, both Labour MPs. The queen of this category is Emma Nicholson MP, whose father, grandfather and three great-grandfathers served in Parliament before her. On arrival at Westminster, she said in the unmistakable tones of a Tory grandee: "I felt immediately that I was at home. At last, I belonged."

The Sheffield Labour MP, Helen Jackson, is the sister of the former MP for Lewisham, Chris Price, while Joyce Quin (also Labour) was a great-uncle in Parliament. The Scottish Nationalist Margaret Ew-

ing is the daughter-in-law of the former SNP MP, Winnie (a rare female connection here) and finally, there is Ray Michie, the Liberal Democrat MP for Argyll and Bute, who would have been the daughter of an MP if only the Liberals had enjoyed better luck in Scotland in the 1950s. Her father, Johnnie Bannerman, ended his days as a Liberal life peer.

In all, I make that a total of 15 women out of 59 with family ties — and there may be more dynasties which have escaped my notice. I do not begrudge these women their success. The suffragettes soon found that Lady Astor was no less a feminist for being married to a peer, and despite living in splendour at Cliveden, she lectured the Tories that "People who live in two houses do not know what it is like to live in two rooms."

Lady Astor's successors are just as intelligent, capable and indepen-

dent-minded. Nor did their family connections give them an automatic entrée into Parliament. They may well have gained more confidence and know-how than actual help from their relatives. Many of them still had to overcome great hurdles to get selected, including Emma Nicholson, for all her proud lineage. She was rejected by 27 Conservative constituency associations before winning the nomination for Devon West and Torridge.

Life has not changed much since *The Times* commented in 1935 that Labour women were usually given "the opportunity of converting the rural populations" while Conservative women appeared "to specialise in the coalfields and East London". Women MPs are disproportionately concentrated in marginal seats, including Emma Nicholson, who has a majority of only 3,614, and Estelle Morris, who

scrapped into Birmingham Yardley with a majority of 162. Nevertheless, as a general rule, women with family connections tend to occupy the safer seats.

Seventy-five years after women won the vote, both the Conservatives and Labour are trying to reverse decades of discrimination. In recent parliamentary selection boards run by the Tories, 40 per cent of the successful candidates have been women; but that does not guarantee that they will be selected by the local parties. Many Conservatives have argued that quotas for women are patronising.

Meanwhile, the Labour Party Conference has voted to nominate women in half of all winnable seats at the next election. Already this has caused a backlash, but without such measures, how many "ordinary" women will ever be elected?

For my part, I wonder why women have been so patient — and why we are still so dependent on men's encouragement for our actions.

The author is political editor of the *New Statesman* & Society.

Birmingham's cancer researchers have foolishly damaged their own cause, argues Nigel Hawkes

## Science must be safe, and seen to be safe

Birmingham University has done us no favours by falling foul of the Health and Safety Executive over experiments on genetic engineering. Perhaps there is something odd in the Midlands air: 15 years ago a Birmingham medical photographer, Janet Parker, was the last person in the world to die of smallpox, after being accidentally infected in a university laboratory.

Last year came disaster of a different kind. An international genetics conference in Birmingham — the first time it has been held in Britain for nearly 40 years — ended in insolvency after miscalculations by the organisers. Speakers invited from all over the world went home grumpy and unpaid. Poor Birmingham seems to be jinxed.

Some scientists will doubtless claim that this week's controversy is a storm in a test-tube. The experiment that has been halted involved putting cancer-causing genes into a virus similar to that which causes the common cold, and then using the transformed virus as a vector to carry the genes into human cells in culture. The idea was to provide a way of studying the genes, an important target in the fight against cancer.

The dangers of such experiments can easily be overstated. The virus vector had been disabled so that it could not replicate itself, reducing the dangers of accidental infection. But the combination of a cancer gene and a virus ought to have rung alarm bells even in the most cloistered of academic minds. It is not how the risk strikes them but how it strikes the public that should have guided the research workers at the department of cancer studies, and the internal university committee reviewing its experiments.

Genetic engineering and the whole field of biotechnology are at a very delicate stage of development. So sensitive has the public become to the potential dangers of new technology that the risks often become apparent before the benefits. From the very beginning, at the Asilomar conference of 1973 which first debated the implications of gene-splicing, the ethical cart has tended to run away with the scientific horse. Many people see genetic manipulation as a threat, not as what it is: the greatest potential benefit to medical and agricultural science for a generation. To the extent that they have aggravated this negative mood, the Birmingham scientists have done their science some harm.

Fear of science has deep roots, as the persistence of the Frankenstein myth makes clear. Scientists are inclined to argue that opposition springs from ignorance, but this does their critics less than justice. Many people regard the slow unravelling of nature's secrets as an intrusion into ancient mysteries which they revere. They deem the secrets more wonderful than their explanations. D.H. Lawrence, constantly calling primal instincts in his acid could not bear to be told that the sun was a ball of fire. Where was the poetry in that?

Allied with this philosophical revolution is the feeling that scientists left to their own devices will always go too far. The creation of new babies from the flesh of aborted foetuses, put like that, is a horrible idea, worthy of Frankenstein himself. You can dress it up in nicer language, but to a lot of people it

will remain horrible. The same applies, to a lesser extent, to genetic manipulation. Scientists in the field should know they are on dangerous ground, and tread carefully.

So far, the way the subject has been handled in Britain shows that we have not lost entirely a talent for good administration. The temptation for all-embracing legislation has been resisted, and a reasonably permissive control regime installed. The halting of the Birmingham experiments is evidence that the system works. If the researchers can produce a convincing case, there is no reason why they should not be allowed to resume.

The opposition to genetic engineering in Britain has been low-key and rational. Animal rights extremists have not been tempted to bomb and burn laboratories engaged in molecular genetics. The issue of genetically engineered food has stimulated only a tiny and rather elevated discussion. The first result has been the announcement by the Co-op that it will put labels on such food, the wisdom of which is open to question. So long as food is safe, advertising its origin is as likely to soothe them.

Other retailers are awaiting the advice of a Ministry of Agriculture committee before they announce a policy. As time has passed, the scientific anxieties about genetic engineering have tended to diminish. Fears that runaway organisms would escape from the laboratory

and poison the environment have been shown to be exaggerated. The careful release of engineered organisms has not so far caused any problems. As a result, control regimes have gradually been eased in many countries, including Germany, where memories of the Nazi past had produced a legislative monster which threatened the country's future as a place to do biological research. In Britain, a sensible report from the House of Lords select committee on science and technology urged a loosening of the reins.

All this depends, however, on the self-restraint of scientists and a recognition that public fears, even if unfounded, are a political fact that cannot be ignored. Some changes in procedure would help. The use of common viruses to carry fragments of genetic material into cells is potentially an area of weakness. Already, one gene therapy trial in America has had to be halted, when the virus vector used to carry genes into people with cystic fibrosis caused a reaction in the patient. In the corresponding British trial, fat particles are being used as vectors, an intrinsically safer procedure. Many laboratory scientists are also looking for alternatives to viruses.

Geneticists who think this is all a silly fuss should reflect on the experience of the nuclear physicists. They too assured us that accidents could never happen. In fact, nuclear power has unquestionably killed and damaged fewer people than any comparable energy source, but facts are less important than perceptions. Despite its successes, nuclear power is in the doghouse: there is even an "ethical" investment trust which refuses to put money into the industry. For all our sakes, it is desperately important that this fate should be avoided by the genetic engineers.

Scientists must see that even unfounded public fears are a political fact

## Labour's missing brains

Where are all the socialist academics who once flocked to Labour Party meetings, wonders Anthony Howard



Was A.J.P. Taylor the last of the great intellectuals behind the Labour Party?

a few years ago Denis Healey characteristically chose to boast in his memoirs that at one stage Harold Wilson's Cabinet contained no fewer than eight Oxford firsts. You would be hard put to it to find one on Labour's front bench today — although that may be partly because the debating society at Glasgow University has virtually taken over the Shadow Cabinet.

But it is not simply a case of academics, like Taylor's brother-in-law Tony Crosland, no longer going in for a full-time career in left-wing politics (though right-wing academics still do in the Tory Party — witness the presence of two fellows of All Souls, William Waldegrave and John Redwood, to say nothing of John Patten, a former

Oxford geography don, in even Mr Major's Cabinet). Much more damaging, it seems to me, is the failure of the current Labour Party to keep any lines open to the academic community. It has by no means always shown such reluctance. Indeed, even in the days of Anles, when R.H. Tawney was the Labour movement's uncrowned ideological king, the party's intellectual wells were regularly refreshed by grand house parties for thinkers at Gavin Faringdon's home at Buscot.

And in the months before Labour came to power in 1964, there was a positive ideological ferment. Admittedly, it was due largely to Dick Crossman, a former Oxford philosophy don who despite his enforced

departure from New College in 1937 never quite lost his taste for senior common room debate. From universities across Britain, academics came regularly to the Bonnington Hotel in Bloomsbury to hammer out the policies they hoped Labour would put into effect once it came to office. They included such luminaries as Lord Annan, Professor Richard Tims and Professor P.M.S. Blackett.

John Smith would no doubt say that this is what his "commission" on social justice is doing today but, in the wake of the abortive Plant committee on electoral reform, it is doing so with barely a rumble in the intellectual undergrowth. The era when a professor from the London School of Economics, like Laski,

could sit for years on Labour's National Executive Committee has gone for good. Today, if a professor gets a look in at all, it is likely to mean being involved, like poor Raymond Plant of Southampton, with some such essentially peephole task as trying to square the circle on voting systems.

Or take the strange case of the now sadly depleted Fabian Society, once the intellectual outlier of the Labour movement. The latest issue of its bi-monthly journal, *Fabian Review*, reveals that of its recently elected executive of 15 members, nearly half are either present or former Labour MPs. The academic ballast, such as it is, comes once again from the all-purpose Professor Plant (who has certainly earned his peerage) and from this year's Fabian chairman Professor Ben Pimlott of Birkbeck College, London, whose own New Year message to the society comes across as little more than a pep talk for the lads. It is a far cry from the days of the Webbs, Shaw and Wells.

Of course, modern politics is a harsh task-mistress and to be apprenticed to it may mean that all licence even for thinking aloud is withdrawn (as Labour's one representative from the London School of Economics in the House of Lords, Lord Desai, has recently discovered). It may be that sympathetic intellectuals in their ivory towers have understood this, and are accordingly reluctant to become involved even on the periphery of the party. But the consequence is to make the Labour movement look strangely impoverished.

Someone like A.J.P. Taylor, with his vehement views on the United States, Germany and the H-bomb, often infuriated Labour's party managers. (He himself was never expelled but, to the party's shame, an even more distinguished figure, Bertrand Russell, once was.) Yet so long as such leading intellectuals manifested even an inconvenient commitment to Labour politics, they gave the party a dimension that the most devoted time-servers can never supply.

There was a time when the Labour Party seemed to recognise that. After all, such a classic academic lion as A. J. Ayer once featured prominently in a Labour election broadcast. True, that was back in the days of Hugh Gaitskell, who was always something of an intellectual snob. But with all his faults, Gaitskell at least understood the importance to the Labour Party of maintaining a connection with the world of ideas. It was a legacy that Harold Wilson, after a promising start, proceeded to squander, and no Labour leader has succeeded in reviving it since. John Smith could do worse than to make it a priority to restore the contact.

Simon Jenkins is on holiday.

## For cars, radio and the Church, it's back to basic models

Glyndebourne must surely be on its way. Forget rings — Rheingold, these days, is made for spending.

All in the pursuit of progress. I have no doubt. But Bernd Fischerrieder, chairman and nephew of Mini designer Sir Alec Issigonis, knows that in Britain such matters need sensitive handling. After all, a country that is plunged into a state of national crisis by the mere suggestion that *The Beano* might bring the Bash Street Kids up to date after 40 years or that Steven Spielberg (an American, for goodness sake) might make the next series of *Dr Who*, is clearly going to be slow in coming forward.

So for Herr P, it's more a case of softly-softly, catchee Britain's last volume car maker. Hence, the well-aimed talk of reviving marques from days of motoring yore, such as Riley, Austin Healey and Tri-



umph, under BMW's benevolent stewardship. While motoring correspondents grow misty-eyed at the prospect, BMW beetles off down the autobahn with Land Rover. *Danke schön und gute Nacht.*

Of course, there is a way that Herr P could earn the undying gratitude of British motorists everywhere. Namely by importing an idea floated by Prime Minister Edouard Balladur to revive the French motor industry. Under Balladur's crock-of-gold scheme, feuding farmers and fighting fishermen — indeed anyone who owns a car more than ten years old — can take their heads out of the roadblocks and down to the *cimetière de voitures* and receive FF5,000 of

government cash. Now, if BMW executives were to spend their Sunday afternoons on Britain's bypasses dishing out £500 to drivers of such *démodé* Leyland marques as Allegro, Marina and Montego, in exchange for one-way trips to the scrapyards, that really would be progress — not to mention a public service. A premium for slow-moving brown Allegros could swing it.

word for memory. The artistic way ahead maybe, but local critics have already dubbed it *mnemonense* — derived from the Scouse appellation.

Pushing forward the artistic frontiers has also been causing problems for Radio One, or Radio Mno-one as it may soon be known. For having dispensed with the services of such luminaries as Simon Bates and Dave Lee Travis (the Montego and Allegro of pop), controller Matthew Bannister has watched his audience dwindle by 1.5 million listeners in just three months. At that rate the station has only two years to live. All we need now is for Radio One to be run over and left by its wife and we have the makings of a splendid "Our Tune".

So, we have BMW pondering bringing back classic cars; we have Radio One considering bringing back classic disc-jockeys. And we have the Church of England getting on with it. It's already decided that the moment is right to bring back classic bishops. Out goes the misfiring Dr David Jenkins and in comes the new Bishop of Durham, the Right Rev Michael Turnbull. He may be short on chrome bumpers, but he does believe in God, the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. Blasphemy may not be what it used to be, but nostalgia certainly is.

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## ACADEMIC DISEASE

The lessons of the cancer virus case for universities

Modern science has spawned few genetic inventions as nightmarish as the germ that can spread cancer. The decision of Government safety inspectors to suspend a genetic research programme at Birmingham University involving the transmission by virus of cancer-causing genes should prompt serious concern about the regulation of dangerous scientific techniques. It also raises questions about the academic culture within which such experiments take place.

The risk at Birmingham may have been fairly small. In theory at least, the virus had been so altered as to prevent any danger of infection; it was merely used to transfer genes to human cells as part of a cancer research programme. Yet even a small risk is unacceptable when a virus — memorably described by the late Sir Peter Medawar as "bad news wrapped in protein" — is being handled. In its notice to the university, the Health and Safety Executive complained that the research involved "genetically modified hazardous micro-organisms in a manner that did not adequately control foreseeable exposure of staff and others". The lethal complexity of the work was not matched by basic professionalism. It is particularly worrying that this should be so at a university where a woman died in 1978 after the escape of a smallpox virus.

The cancer virus case suggests that the national regulation system for genetic engineering which came into force last year is working well. The HSE used its powers under the Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations swiftly and effectively. Yet the principal guarantee of responsible genetic research must be local regulation on each campus. It is here that the monitoring system is evidently weakest. Birmingham University must explain the

procedural failures which exposed its staff — let alone the local population — to jeopardy.

The reaction of the academic community to the public's understandable alarm yesterday was politely sympathetic but essentially defensive. In the university system there is still a strong tradition of scholarly hubris which resents public criticism of academic work. Equally, it is not clear that universities are matching the safety standards set by commercial organisations involved in similar research.

Academic freedom remains a foundation of democracy. But it is no more absolute than any other civil liberty. In scientific work, the utilitarian calculus must play an important part. Research programmes such as this may yield enormous social benefits, reducing the incidence of appalling disease; but that prospect must be measured against the immediate risks which they entail. The inclination of a democratic society to permit (and in many cases to pay for) such work will dwindle if universities do not respect this fundamental principle of accountability. Universities engaged in scientific work are not subject to the same market pressures as commercial organisations to maintain an impeccable record; yet their ethical responsibility to do so is no smaller.

Too many do still inhabit the sequestered world described by C. P. Snow, clinging to a relaxed amateurism which is now quite inappropriate in many fields. The idea of a university has failed to keep pace with technological and social change. The possibility that human error might have unleashed a cancer-carrying virus in a major city should alert science faculties to the need for more stringent self-regulation. Only by policing themselves effectively will universities preserve their historic independence.

## GOOD MORNING VIETNAM

Now is time to set aside old traumas and heal bitter history

Within hours of President Clinton's announcement that he was lifting the American embargo on Vietnam, Pepsi Cola was being sold on the streets of Ho Chi Minh City, United Airlines announced plans for direct flights from Los Angeles to Vietnam, and American Express had concluded a deal with a Vietnamese bank to allow the use of its credit card. There was no more telling evidence of the frustration of American business at being shut out from the lucrative Vietnamese market at a time of unparalleled change, growth and opportunity. President Clinton's decision was dictated as much by the urgent entreaties of American companies as by the urgent advice of his diplomats to draw a final line under the Vietnam war.

The economic effects of relaxing the ban on American trade and investment, imposed in 1964 on the north and extended in 1975 to the south after the Communist victory, are obvious and immediate. Vietnam, with 65 million people, is one of Asia's most dynamic societies. The population is young, well educated and eager to exploit the paradox of a communist government giving full rein to capitalist enterprise. Vietnam's economic changes have been applauded by the West, but the response, dictated largely by American sensitivities, has been guarded. Even Japan, straining to unleash its economic greyhounds in this new arena, has been inhibited by the shadows of the American penumbra. President Clinton's decision will not only shore up the reformers in Hanoi, but will accelerate a rush of foreign investment that is already fuelling a construction boom.

American companies were allowed to open offices and sign contracts in Vietnam under earlier partial relaxations, but were still unable to trade and invest freely. The president denies that he has been influenced by economic statistics. This may be disingenuous, but it is at least sensitive to the powerful emotions of hundreds of thousands of Americans who served in the brutal

Vietnam war or whose sons and brothers were killed or are missing. Republican administrations never dared to confront these standard-bearers of the patriotic right, and invested enormous energy in commissions of inquiry into the MIAs and delegations to Hanoi to investigate reported sightings. Mr Clinton, like most of the country, knows that the missing will never now come home and that policy can no longer be dictated by mourning. In challenging the veterans, a few months after taking on the gun lobby, he has broken another political taboo. Tactfully, however, he has pointed out that cooperation is more likely to yield information about the 2,238 Americans still listed as missing than continued confrontation.

Hanoi has reacted with scarcely concealed euphoria to Mr Clinton's announcement. Vietnam is clearly eager to repay Washington with promises of full participation in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation grouping — the emerging cluster of rapidly industrialising countries which met in Seattle last year. Bringing Vietnam fully back into the comity of south-east Asian nations could make a decisive difference to regional stability. Vietnam, historically a warrior nation, is the political and geo-strategic lynchpin for the entire region; its belligerence has caused untold suffering; its capacity for hard work and betterment of its society should now consolidate the fragile stability that has come after so much blood and bitterness to Indo-China.

Only the middle-aged now remember the Vietnam war, the defining conflict for a generation of western, and especially American, political leaders. For others, Vietnam is merely a searing theme that has inspired a dozen or more films. By opening up the country to normal, commercial relations, Mr Clinton has allowed thousands of people to return as tourists to the paddyfields where America lost its way. At long last, the two countries may now come together to set aside their traumas and heal their history.

## EVERYONE'S FIRST ELEVEN

Pick an England team for fun — and a prize

Today, and for the next ten days, *The Times* offers readers a chance to pick the England cricket team that would be most likely to beat the West Indies. For the winner there is a prize of tickets to this year's Christmas Test in Australia. For everyone who loves the game, who has ever railed against the idiosyncrasy of official selectors, or who has passed idle days compiling World Elevens, there is fun to be had from turning to page 30, picking up the telephone and starting to play.

Cricket, in this respect as in so many others, is not like other sports. Soccer arouses passions. So does rugby. But those games lack that special dimension that cricket has always had: the rich pedantry of statistics. In football, goals are just goals; tries, in rugby, should spectators be so lucky, are only tries. Cricket, however, marries philosophy to fact. *Wisden*, treasured by many who have never played the game and never will, is proof of this. Numbers create an ideal sporting realm in which dreams have always flourished.

Cricket-lovers, dreamers all, are disputatious spirits. Everyone has had his preference, each indulged in different ways: those all-time world team sheets, scribbled on the last page of a history notebook (should Bradman captain the side, or Sobers? How can you ask?) or what is the

best team of left-handed Englishmen to play left-handers from Australia (would Underwood, who bowled with his left hand but batted with his right, count)? Who would be in a modern "All India" XI, based on an assumption, not lightly made, that the subcontinent had not been partitioned?

Feeling one's way through a jungle of statistics — which, perversely, often obscure as much as they reveal — such teams are assembled, and reluctant bargains struck by schoolboys. Graham Gooch may have made 333 against India, the highest score by an England opening batsman in a Test match; but should he, and not Boycott, open the batting with Hutton? Shane Warne may spin through modern batting line-ups with vim, and has startling figures to prove it. But does that make him a better choice for the leg-spinner's spot than "Tiger" O'Reilly, who bowled against batsmen who were better players of spin?

The game is, as ever, the thing. To all questions there is, maddeningly, delightfully, no right answer. But this frustration is the source of cricket's greatest strength. Cricket fantasies, and passionate imaginings, are a part of cricket itself. *The Times* gives them its unreserved approval, and awaits the teams assembled by its readers.

## Rail lines to be built in isolation

From the Director General and Secretary of the Institution of Civil Engineers

Sir, We have recently had welcome news of progress on three major schemes which will have a lasting impact on our transport network: the high-speed link with the Channel tunnel, CrossRail and the Heathrow link. We applaud these essential improvements to our infrastructure but note that they are three separate projects.

What is remarkable by its absence is any attempt to integrate these developments. Where is the strategic vision that should have ensured appropriate interchanges between what is currently an unconnected group of transport projects? Why are the three schemes that overlap in places being developed in isolation? Why will millions of travellers be denied a smooth transfer system? We are not realising the full benefit of these major investments, for lack of a national strategy.

North of the Border a strategic approach has been applied to transport systems by the Scottish Office. This has resulted in the M74 transportation corridor for road, rail and pipeline schemes.

Strategic planning on essential interfaces is lacking in the South East and this must be rectified if we are to develop the integrated transport philosophy that the nation so urgently requires, and avoid the "inch-worm" approach described by the *Panorama* programme on bypasses broadcast on January 24.

Here is a clear opportunity to get back to basics by ensuring that flexible interchanges between the new projects are provided during the design phase.

Yours faithfully,  
ROGER DOBSON,  
Director General and Secretary,  
The Institution of Civil Engineers,  
Great George Street, SW1,  
February 4.

## Parking penalties

From the Deputy Director General of the Automobile Association

Sir, Nick Lester, the London parking director, writes (letter, January 29) that motorists unhappy with a parking ticket will be able to write to the local council, and, if still unsatisfied, "will be able to ask for a review of the case by an independent adjudicator". However, many motorists will not have access to independent adjudication.

Unfairness is not a ground for adjudication, and yet this is by far the most common complaint we receive from our members. And because local authorities are having to contract out parking enforcement, the likelihood is that a contractor will issue the parking ticket and the same contractor will review the case in the event of an appeal.

This is patently unjust. The AA has taken up the matter with Steven Norris, the transport minister for London, but to no avail. The sad fact is that many motorists who believe they have been unjustly ticketed, or who have had their vehicle clamped or towed away unfairly by the local council, will have no access to justice.

Yours sincerely,

KENNETH FAIRCLOTH,  
Deputy Director General,  
The Automobile Association,  
Norfolk House, Princes Road,  
Basingstoke, Hampshire,  
February 1.

From Mr Howard Lamb

Sir, As a regular London motorist who has paid promptly those few tickets received, I welcome the news that illegally parked persistent evaders of parking fines are to be identified by hand-held computer and their vehicles clamped or towed away. A fairer appeals system is also to be applauded.

Yet I am puzzled that the London parking director finds unacceptable the Los Angeles system of clamping legally parked vehicles whose owners have outstanding tickets.

Unacceptable to whom? Presumably to persistent evaders of parking fines. Surely not to law-abiding citizens and those who attempt to park legitimately and pay promptly any inadvertently incurred fines.

Is this another example of the reluctance of British justice to provide a punishment or deterrent to fit the crime?

Yours faithfully,  
HOWARD LAMB,  
North Bank, 75 Ridge Way,  
Wargrave, Berkshire,  
January 29.

## Finance Bill drafting

From Mr Maurice Parry-Wingfield

Sir, The president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants criticises the draftsmanship of the Finance Bill for the obscurity of its self-assessment provisions (letter, January 25). Mr Francis Bennion, a former parliamentary draftsman, contests the criticism (letter, February 1) on the grounds that "law is and has to be an expertise. It needs to be explained to the lay person, whether by officials or professionals in private practice".

As one such professional, I would submit that a simpler system of assessing does not necessarily lead to simple legislation — but that it helps if it does. The layman can then interpret

## Confusion and conspiracy over British sense of identity

From Mr W. B. Hesmondhalgh

Sir, One important reason why the British have lost their identity (letters, February 1) is that no indication of what made us what we are is given in our TV and radio programmes. Little attention is given to the UK's history and culture.

There are excellent programmes on current affairs, politics, nature, sport, etc. some very good "soaps", far too many Westerns, but virtually nothing, by comparison, about what happened in the past to cause us and our culture to develop as they have. No wonder so many of us have become so confused.

Yours faithfully,  
BETRAM HESMONDHALGH,  
17 South Eaton Place, SW1.

From Mr Philip Allott

Sir, British society is always changing and it is never easy to understand social change as it happens.

What seems to have been happening over the last 40 years is that the people in general are ceasing to accept that our main social institutions should be run as conspiracies. It is wrong to see this as a dramatic decline in respect for the institutions themselves.

No English forelock has ever been touched with any deep sense of conviction. The people have always known that their betters were not necessarily better, and that those who claim to serve the public interest are quite capable of thereby serving private interests of their own.

Nor is this change a side-effect of increasing disaffection, immorality and criminality. It is, as it always has been, a miracle that the vast majority of people lead decent, well-ordered lives, especially given the pressures and temptations of modern society, and given the relentless publicity now given to the vices and inadequacies of the privileged.

It may be that Britain, which led the world towards liberal democracy and

capitalism, is now called upon to pioneer a new form of open society, in which all the social institutions which have been run as paternalist-rationalist oligarchies will no longer be able to rely on a grudging suspension of distrust on the part of the people.

It may not be easy, but it will certainly be interesting, to try to run a society in which social institutions are deprived of every vestige of mystification and charisma, and in which they are simply known for what they are and are judged simply for what they do. Like the prospect of democracy and capitalism two centuries ago, it is not a prospect which only pleases.

Yours sincerely,  
PHILIP ALLOTT,  
Trinity College, Cambridge,  
February 3.

From Sir John Stokes

Sir, Throughout my 22 years as an MP I was sustained by the wisdom, common sense, conservatism and patriotism of those people whom I met on a Friday night at clubs and pubs in my constituency. It is *their* views that our masters in Church and State and in the media should listen to if we are to regain that cohesion and stability in our society which we had before the Second World War.

Chesterton summed it all up in his poem "The Secret People": "But we are the people of England, and we have not spoken yet."

Yours faithfully,  
JOHN STOKES,  
(Conservative MP for Oldbury and Halesowen, 1970-74, and Halesowen and Stourbridge, 1974-92),  
Top Barn, Church End,  
Haddenham, Buckinghamshire.

From Mr Richard Barber

Sir, Ask an American to list symbols of what America means to him and he will probably nominate liberty, equal opportunity, democracy, a free mar-

ket, classlessness and such-like. If you had asked a Briton a similar question about his country a couple of decades ago, he might have named the White Cliffs of Dover, Stonehenge, St Paul's, the Scott Monument, the Welsh valleys and so on, depending where he lived.

The American sees his country as an ideal, the Briton identifies his with a sense of place and the power of the land. The first is forward-looking but rootless, the latter conservative and strongly steeped in history. Culturally, they are quite different.

Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD BARBER,  
Greenside, Tresco,  
Isles of Scilly, Cornwall,  
February 2.

From Mr Stuart Millson

Sir, The present mood of the nation seems clearly to be one of pessimism. Within the space of just half a century we have slipped from our position as an imperial nation to that of a mere dependent territory of a European superstate. Most of our principal towns and cathedral cities now contain large mosques. Many of our teachers deride our native literary and historical achievements.

Perhaps the fact that we have not in modern times been conquered militarily has made us complacent, even lazy, about the defence of our way of life. Yet at this moment our country is being conquered by political correctness, by a multiculturalism that despises or rejects all things Anglo-Saxon, and by European bureaucracy.

Unless the British abandon their much-famed easy-going nature for the time being and resist these forces they could face national extinction.

Yours faithfully,  
STUART MILLSON,  
109 Durham Road, Shortlands,  
Bromley, Kent,  
February 1.

## Some solutions for City and other redundant churches

From the Secretary of the Church and Historic Building Preservation Trust

Sir, We must wake up to the problems of our redundant ecclesiastical buildings in this country (Templeman enquiry report and leading article, January 29). Our churches and chapels represent symbols of continuity in an era of change and invariably they have exceptional landscape and townscape value.

Our response to redundant churches must be to move forward. It is a fact that there are more religious buildings than society appears to need. Church buildings come to the end of their life but this must not be an excuse for stagnation and eventually demolition. Rather it must serve as a catalyst for renewal and regeneration. New uses are required if they are to survive other than as empty monuments.

These threatened churches in London reflect a common problem but it is essential to act now to ensure the longevity of the buildings. The official process of redundancy is subject to convoluted and time-consuming measures which result in inordinate delays and exposes the building to deterioration of the fabric adding to the repair element of any scheme finally formulated.

We must not delay in providing a positive response to the task of finding new uses for these buildings.

Yours faithfully,  
C. BARANOWSKI,  
Secretary,  
The Church and Historic Building Preservation Trust,  
24 Grosvenor Road,  
Aldershot, Hampshire,  
January 31.

## Arms sales

From Lieutenant Commander Colin McMillan, RN (ret)

Sir, The Foreign Secretary tells us (letter, January 31): "Developed and developing countries alike should have the right to buy the equipment which they need for their defence or for peacekeeping, provided that national and international laws are observed."

This really is a vintage humbug in the context of the arms embargo on the government of Bosnia, which has suffered invasion by other former Yugoslav republics.

Your obedient servant,  
COLIN McMILLAN,  
12 Park Avenue, NW11,  
January 31.

## Honours system

From Mr Desmond Briggs

Sir, The most sensible reform of the honours system would be to lay down that no one shall receive an award in recognition of work that they are already paid to do.

This would dispose of Brigadier Ryder's "ambitious majors" (letter, February 2), as well as going collecting ambassadors and coy teachers. Reserving honours to the voluntary sector might restore some public respect for the system.

Yours faithfully,  
DESMOND BRIGGS,  
Old Werretts,  
Castle Combe, Chippenham,  
Wiltshire,  
February 2.

## Public-sector waste?

From the Reverend W. R. Greatrex

Sir, It is unfair to suggest (Mr Tut-till's letter, February 2) that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was in Davos from a Thursday to a Sunday solely to make a six-minute speech. On the contrary, he had almost the entire conference to learn about world economics. Would anyone consider that to be a waste?

Sincerely,  
WARREN GREATREX,  
The Highlands, Great Doward,  
Symonds Yat, Herefordshire,  
February 2.

## Gone with the wind

From Mr D. E. Williams

Sir, Perhaps some of your readers who are experts at handling oddly labelled electrical devices (letters, January 24, 27, 29, 31, February 1) can advise me about a small Chinese-made battery-powered cigarette lighter which I found in a Christmas cracker recently. It is marked: "Wind proof — it fights against the wind whenever you ride your car keeping the window open."

Since I have found it impossible to remove the protective hood without using both hands, I wonder whether Chinese roads are full of chain-smoking drivers swerving from side to side as they light up?

Yours faithfully,  
D. E. WILLIAMS,  
The Old Post Office, Howe Street,  
Great Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex.

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Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.







## OBITUARIES

## DR MARIE-ANDRÉE WEILL-HALLÉ

Dr Marie-Andrée Weill-Hallé, founder of the French Family Planning Association, died in Paris on January 8 aged 77. She was born in Bouscat, Gironde, on January 13, 1916.

FOR thirty years, Marie-Andrée Weill-Hallé fought for French women's right to contraception and abortion in the face of opposition from the Roman Catholic Church and from successive governments concerned with increasing France's postwar population at almost any cost. Her work was crowned by the 1967 law relaxing restrictions on the promotion and sale of contraceptives and the 1975 law liberalising abortion, known as the Veil law after the current French Minister of State in charge of health, Simone Veil.

It was a long, uphill battle for the militant feminist. It started when, as a medical student in Paris just before the war, she witnessed, by chance, a clumsy and painful abortion performed without anaesthesia in a hospital operating theatre. She heard doctors state that this was the only way to prevent a recurrence of unwanted pregnancies. She had been brought up as a strict Catholic, but this experience formed the basis of the first of several books championing contraception.

Her marriage in 1944 to the celebrated, left-leaning paediatrician, Benjamin Weill-Hallé, who had pioneered infant vaccination in the 1920s, raised her profile within the French medical establishment since her husband, 41 years her senior, was a member of the prestigious Académie de Médecine.

She visited family planning clinics in the United States, notably those of the Planned Parenthood Federation of



Margaret Sandler. Upon her return, she addressed the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques in Paris.

Despite youthful looks and short blonde hair that gave her the air of an American college student, Marie-Andrée Weill-Hallé won over many members of this august body, but the medical corps in general, just like the politicians with their policies for larger families, opposed her as did the religious hierarchy. She was often attacked as an apostate for abortion.

In 1955, by then a well-known gynaecologist and mother of three, she took the witness stand to defend a young couple living in poverty, who were accused of allowing their fourth child to die from hunger. After maintaining that they had sought desperately not to have the child, the couple heard Weill-Hallé make an impassioned plea on their behalf.

She attacked French obscurantism over contraception and the fact that there was one law for poor and another for rich women who were able to procure contraceptives from abroad. The couple received a lenient sentence and Weill-Hallé's subsequent book, *La Maternité Heureuse*, further moved public opinion, to the extent that she was able to form the Maternité Heureuse movement, forerunner of her Family Planning Association.

She opened family planning centres — in Grenoble, Paris and dozens of towns — which flouted the anti-contraception law dating back to 1920. This law banned any publicity for contraceptives, and hence denied their acquisition except by the better-informed segment of the female population.

A fierce national debate ensued dividing political parties with the then-powerful French Communist Party siding with the anti-contraception lobby on the ground, never avowed publicly, that contraception would limit the growth of the working-class and thus the Communist vote. Maurice Thorez, the party leader, in 1956 denounced journalist Jacques Derogy and Weill-Hallé, who had collaborated together on a book for encouraging working women to adopt "bourgeois" values. Contraception provided Thorez with a diversionary issue at the party congress that spared him from mentioning Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin's crimes.

Weill-Hallé consistently argued for French women to have the same choices as women in the United States, Britain and elsewhere. She pointed to the tens of thousands of abortions each year. The success of the family planning movement with its many thou-

sands of members (and with Weill-Hallé prescribing the pill) paved the way for Lucien Neuwirth to present a Bill legalising the sale of contraceptives which was passed by the National Assembly in 1967.

Weill-Hallé resigned from the Family Planning Association shortly afterwards claiming that family planning had become a "political gadget". The movement survived, while she continued her pioneering work at her Paris practice and at clinics for the needy across the capital. In fact, it took another five years before various restrictions surrounding the 1967 law, notably concerning formalities for the sale of the pill and the ban on the sale of contraceptives to women under 21, were dropped.

A series of official posts followed. She was named secretary-general of the National Committee on Birth Control and became a member of both the High Committee on Population and the Council on Sexual Information. Birth Control and Family Education. The government sent her as its representative to numerous international conferences and she thus helped pave the way for the introduction of the abortion law of 1975. Made inevitable by massive pressure from ordinary women. The law granted the right of abortion to women up to ten weeks pregnant, although abortion remains part of the criminal code for minors and foreigners without valid papers.

Marie-Andrée Weill-Hallé, who had always been guided by medical and human considerations (she was never a political militant like her husband), was finally granted the *légion d'honneur* for her pioneering work. She continued to practise up until her death. She leaves three children.

## ABBOT COLUMBA CARY-ELWES

Dom Columba Cary-Elwes, Benedictine monk and schoolmaster, died at York on January 22 aged 90. He was born on November 3, 1903.



DOM Columba Cary-Elwes was a monk whose influence and reputation extended to all five continents. An ardent believer in Christian unity and an inveterate traveller, he managed to combine a life of constant movement with a commitment to monastic stability and simplicity of life which was characteristically Benedictine.

Having been the inspiration of several generations of boys as a housemaster at Ampleforth, he went on to found a monastery in America and to help establish the Benedictine life in Nigeria.

Returning in old age to Yorkshire, he made frequent forays overseas, bringing wisdom and encouragement to religious communities and laity in Australia, India, Latin America, Africa and elsewhere. Author of a steady flow of books and articles, he kept up a worldwide correspondence, was in great demand as confessor and guide and became a spiritual father to the monks of his own community and its wider family.

Evelyn Charles Cary-Elwes was born into the Roman Catholic branch of an old landed family and educated at Ampleforth, where he became head boy, played rugby for the school and gave no sign of an impending vocation to the priesthood or the monastic life. But after two years in the wine trade and the City, he was admitted to the novitiate at Ampleforth in 1923, taking the name Columba as a symbol of reconciliation between Ireland and England.

He read French at Oxford, taught himself Spanish so as to be able to read St John of the Cross in the original, and was ordained in 1933. There followed 14 years as a housemaster and teacher of Spanish, French and politics at Ampleforth. A shade austere to younger boys, he blossomed among sixth-formers, who sensed the reality and strength of his religious faith, found his interest in

world affairs and openness to new ideas infectious, and discovered the reserves of humour and kindness which lay behind the self-discipline.

It was during this time that he wrote *China and the Cross*, still the definitive account of Christian missionary activity in China, and earned the enduring friendship of Arnold Toynbee — their thirty years' correspondence being published in 1966 under the title *An Historian's Conscience*.

His contacts with Toynbee widened his horizons and helped to foster his lifelong interest in the then (for Catholics) suspect field of ecumenism. This led him to contribute to *The Times* in 1949 a prophetic non-triumphalist letter arguing for mutual understanding and respect between Anglicans and Roman Catholics instead of polemic.

After a short spell as Prior of Ampleforth, he was chosen in 1955 to be the first superior of the foundation which Ampleforth had been invited to make at St Louis, Missouri, and spent the next 12 years of his life building up the monastery and school there. His time in America broke down some of his English reserve, intensified his capacity for friendship and revealed the tolerance and gentleness which were to be distinguishing characteristics for the rest of his life.

He took in his stride the

upheavals which followed the Second Vatican Council, welcoming the new and more relaxed ecumenical and intellectual climate while maintaining a serene and steady confidence in the Church and its traditional spirituality. He had scarcely returned from America before he set off to investigate the need for an English Benedictine presence in Africa. His pioneering journeys across Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda became legendary, but he eventually came to rest in Nigeria, where he founded the monastery at Eke, now flourishing under the wing of the Irish Benedictines of Glenstal.

His final years at Ampleforth were equally fruitful. He gave retreats around the world, making friends among people of all faiths and of none. Drawing on a lifetime's experience and reading, he produced his own "spiritual dictionary" called *Experiences with God*, along with numerous articles, a commentary on St Benedict's Rule (*Work and Prayer*) and a book of poems.

As observant in his friendships as in his monastic life, he was a lively and faithful letter-writer; and in 1980 he was made Master of Ampleforth's lay oblates, who grew under his inspiration from a tiny handful to a group of nearly 200.

As he grew older, his sympathy with human frailty increased and his gradual detachment from worldly concerns was veiled by a self-deprecating humour and a twinkling eye. His activity had always been rooted in prayer, and now he became self-evidently a man of God. The old-fashioned term "spiritual director" has connotations of sternness and formality at variance with the gentleness and simplicity of his style; but a spiritual father he certainly was, acting as guide, encourager and confessor to people of all ages and stages of spiritual development.

In 1992, in recognition of his standing among the English Benedictines and his services to his brethren, he was made titular Abbot of Westminster; but to his many friends across the world he remained, as always, simply "Father Columba".

## ERNEST SHANKS

Ernest Shanks, CBE, QC, former Deputy Bailiff of Guernsey, died on January 18 aged 83. He was born on January 11, 1911.

ERNEST SHANKS secured his place in colonial history 35 years ago by handing over control of Singapore. As the Minister of Legal Affairs and Attorney-General, he acted for the Governor in his absence at the time that the island achieved its independence. Singapore's triumph was, however, a minor disaster for Shanks. Like so many other colonial administrators, the end of empire left him without a job.

After joining the colonial legal service following the Second World War, he had at first gone out to the Far East as a district judge, based at Trengganu on the east coast of Malaya. Having moved in 1947 to Singapore, he climbed to the top government legal post in ten years, serving first as Solicitor General and Crown Counsel.

At independence, still only 48, he had to scour the world for a new appointment. After turning down a colonial post in Africa, he eventually found his niche on another island. In 1960 he became HM Comptroller in Guernsey, the equivalent of Solicitor General at Westminster. Nine years later he was made the Procureur (Attorney-General) and in 1973 became Deputy Bailiff — in effect the deputy head of the civil government.

Despite initial misgivings about his prospects in the Channel Islands, he had once more risen almost to the top. He had little chance of becoming the Bailiff, partly on account of his age and partly because he had not been born in Guernsey.

Ernest Pattison Shanks was, in fact, born in Lancaster, the son of a well-to-do bleach manufacturer (and later on mayor of Rochdale) who sent his young son to Mill Hill School. He spent 12 months learning German at a college in Bonn, then went up to Downing College, Cambridge. A cross-country runner and hockey player at school, he was unlucky not to get a hockey blue.

Called to the Bar by the Inner Temple in 1936, he practised for the next three years on the northeastern

circuit, picking up what criminal briefs he could as a young struggling advocate. But he also joined the Territorials.

In consequence, when the Second World War broke out, Shanks soon found himself with the British Expeditionary Force in France. He was mentioned in dispatches while serving as a young officer in the Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment and narrowly escaped capture with the 51st Highland Division at St Valery.

Back in this country, he was transferred to the Middlesex Regiment, with whom he served in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. In 1944 he was sent to the Staff College, Camberley, then to Schleswig-Holstein in 1946 as senior legal officer with the military government. The man from whom he took over in Schleswig-Holstein was a Major John Donaldson, later to become Lord Donaldson, Master of the Rolls.

Shanks was demobilised in the same year, however, whereupon he joined the colonial legal service. His promotion to lieutenant-colonel in the Army Reserve came after the war.

On retiring as Deputy Bailiff in 1976 he stayed in Guernsey where he became deeply involved in island life. A friendly, clubbable man, he was famous for turning up and "keeping in touch". He was a diligent president of the Old Millhillians, 1979-80, and of the Middlesex Regiment reunions ever took place without him. Once a year he would visit the mainland for a "walk-about" looking up old friends.

Several years ago he went round the world on a similar mission, to see one son and two nephews in America and another son in Australia. In Singapore he visited his former cook, Ah Sung, to find that she had risen in the world since he last saw her. It was she who took him out to lunch, after which she insisted on paying for his taxi back to his home.

Ernest Shanks (always known as "Bean" within his family) was married twice. His first marriage ended in divorce although he kept in touch with Audrey his first wife. His second wife, Betty, died in 1991 and he is survived by a son from his first marriage and two sons and a daughter from his second.

## ANONA WINN



Anona Winn, second right, with Jack Train, Joy Adamson and Richard Dimbleby recording the 200th edition of *Twenty Questions* in 1951

Anona Winn, MBE, radio quiz panelist, singer and actress, died on February 2 aged 86. She was born in Sydney in 1907.

AN ORIGINAL member of the panel of personalities who played the long-running BBC radio quiz game *Twenty Questions*, Anona Winn went on to be its longest surviving panelist. Her longevity was, at least in part, the result of her sharp intelligence and "intuitive sixth sense" in identifying the object words of the game. Week after week during the 1950s, the programme's 15 million regular listeners would be astonished by her seemingly telepathic ability to deduce the object in question, when the logical sequence of questions and answers had led the team wildly astray or down the darkest of alleys.

When *Twenty Questions* began in 1947, Anona Winn's co-panelists were Jack Train, a mainstay of the *Itma* comedy programme, Richard Dimbleby, the war correspondent, and Daphne Paddell, another regular radio commentator with Stewart McPherson, the Canadian sports commentator as question master and Norman Hackforth supplying the deep-toned "mystery voice" which revealed the object of the game to the listeners.

The programme quickly became popular and its

panelists became national celebrities. Anona Winn established herself as a sharp-witted and amusing performer. There was a minor uproar when Daphne Paddell was dropped by Ian Messier, the programme's producer, after three years following what he claimed were complaints from listeners that they could not tell the two women panelists apart. Paddell's replacement was Joy Adamson — who also played "Aunt Peggy" in *Mrs Dale's Diary* — while Kenneth Horne, who took over from McPherson. He in turn was replaced by Gilbert Harding who was suspended for a time in 1951 when he lost his temper and made what were described as "unsatisfactory remarks" picked up by a "live" microphone and broadcast.

Anona Winn, who was only 5ft 1in tall, had early ambitions to be a lawyer and a pianist. However, after matriculation she turned to singing and had her voice trained at the Melba Conservatoire in Melbourne. She came to Britain with the intention of pursuing an operatic career but had her first singing opportunity in the show, *Hit the Deck* at the London Hippodrome. Her first broadcast was from Savoy Hill in 1929 in revues with Harry Pepper, Doris Arnold and Tommy Handley and she went on to sing on *Variety Bandbox* and *Songs of the Shows*. In 1934

she performed for the first time at the London Palladium and four years later played Peter in *Peter Pan* for a record 20-week season. She later toured the music halls and variety theatres as a solo act and in 1947 played for more than two years in the stage show *Bless The Bride*.

In addition to her success on *Twenty Questions*, Anona Winn conceived and chaired the radio programme, *Petticoat Line*, which, for 14 years, provided a feminine, and mildly feminist, set of viewpoints prompted by listeners' letters.

In 1975, *Twenty Questions* was still going strong on radio when it was subjected to a "face-lift". Norman Hackforth, the mystery voice, was dropped along with panelists, Joy Adamson and Peter Glaze, and the chairman, Peter Jones. Anona Winn survived and was joined by Terry Wogan, Willie Rushon, Brian Johnston and Bettine Le Beau. A year later, however, she herself was finally dropped after a 20-year run. Although she then faded from the limelight she continued her charitable work for servicemen's clubs for which she was appointed MBE in 1954. In 1980 she was admitted to a nursing home. Anona Winn was a widow, her husband, Frederick Lampert, a theatrical agent, having died two years after their marriage in 1933.

John Liley, farmer and racehorse owner who financed Grand Metropolitan in its early days, died in Broad Campden, Gloucestershire, on January 31 aged 82. He was born in the Vale of Evesham on January 15, 1912.

JOHN LILEY was a popular farmer and corn merchant in the Vale of Evesham, and a winning racehorse owner, who was incidentally involved, in his early years, with Sir Maxwell Joseph's Grand Metropolitan hotel chain. He retained an influence in the business well into the 1970s.

John Edward Liley was educated at Wylliffe College, Stonehouse, and afterwards joined the family business as an agricultural merchant. At the same time, in the early 1930s, he bought a 400-acre dairy, sheep and arable farm outside Evesham, which he continued to run until his death. He was one of the first to import a herd of Charolais cattle into the country from France — in 1965 — and kept a herd of deer in later years.

Having been blinded in one eye at school, during a particularly brutal game of rugby against a Welsh team, Liley was rejected for active service in the war. He served instead in the Home Guard, training dispatch riders.

It was in 1947 that Liley met Maxwell Joseph, Joseph was then beginning to build up his chain of hotels, having already purchased the Mandeville and

## JOHN LILEY

two hotels in Bayswater. He asked Liley to come into the business as a sleeping partner. Liley pledged everything he had to find the money and stumped up £25,000 which helped enable Joseph to buy the first hotel officially in the Grand Metropolitan group, the Washington.

While Liley continued to farm, he drove up to London

divorced in 1954. He met his second wife, Mary Brown, on holiday in South Africa, where she lived, and married her in 1971. From then on they spent six months of every year in South Africa on an estate near Durban where Liley established himself as one of the country's top racehorse owners, having 75 of them in all as well as a stud farm.

His return visits to England coincided with the Cheltenham Gold Cup, Newmarket Sales and Doncaster. He stabled 17 horses in Gloucestershire, including Jupiter Boy, which won the Mackeson Gold Cup in 1968. It was trained, as were all his horses in Britain, by the National Hunt trainer Fred Rimell.

By 1978 Liley, now very wealthy from his shares in Grand Metropolitan, was spending so much time abroad that he felt, at Joseph's suggestion, obliged to resign from his post as non-executive director of the company.

Liley was a flamboyant but modest man, always free with his money and never known to turn away a deserving cause. But he also had an explosive temper and did not enjoy being thwarted, particularly by younger men and bank managers. Much of his ire was directed towards successive British Labour governments in the 1970s who refused to do business with South Africa, a subject on which he wrote at length to British newspapers.

John Liley is survived by his second wife and two daughters from the first marriage.

Liley and his first wife were

throughout the 1950s and 1960s for board meetings. After the meetings he would walk to Christie's or Sotheby's. He was a keen art collector and twice correctly identified hitherto unrecorded works by Stubbs, including one for which he paid only £80. He also had a collection of bronzes.

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## Latest wills

Lieutenant-Colonel John Raymond Louis Denis Brett, of Elkhound, North Humberstone, who commanded the Royal Garhwal Rifles in Burma where he was twice mentioned in despatches and later served as Chief of Staff in Sumatra, left estate valued at £128,910 net.

Brigadier Richard Clarence Halse, of London SW5, Director of Army Legal Services 1953-62 and in 1979 and made the first Colonel Commandant of the Army Legal Corps, left estate valued at £60,327 net.

He left £500 to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, to conduct the benefit known as the Halse Prize.

Mrs Natalie Gurney-Taylor, of London NW3, left estate valued at £504,506 net.

She left £19,000 and other legacies to personal legatees, and her stocks and shares in Gurney Investments Ltd and the residue of her estate to the Psychiatry Research Trust.

Sir David Peronnet Selby, of Gudden Morden, Cambridge-

shire, formerly of Tadlow, late barrister, chairman of the Central Council of the Conservative Party 1977-78, left estate valued at £199,323 net.

Miss Alice Eliza Mary Hughes, of Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, left estate valued at £622,961 net.

She left £1,000 each to Crowstone St. George's United Reformed Church, Westcliff-on-Sea, Inter Church Caring of Crowstone St. George's and St. Saviours, Westcliff-on-Sea, Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, Dr Barnardo's, RSPCA and RSPCN, and the residue equally between the RNLI, Christian Aid, Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, Cancer Research Campaign, Arthritis and Rheumatism Research Fund, Multiple Sclerosis Society, and the British Heart Foundation, of the Institute of Neurology, of Somerville, West Sussex, left estate valued at £725,097.

She left personal legacies totalling £10,000, £5,000 to the Salvation Army, and the residue to the RNLI, Phyllis Usher, of Blackpool, Lancs, left estate valued at £517,727 net. She left £2,000 to the Staff Fund of

the Hawthorne Trust, Farmington, Kent, and the residue equally between the Hawthorne Trust, and the first Church of Christ Scientist, Blackpool.

Gertrude Abodoy, of London NW3, left estate valued at £2,616,426 net.

She left £19,000 variously to personal legatees, £2,000 to the Royal Overseas League, £1,000 each to the West London Synagogue of British Jews, London W1, and Amnesty International British Section, and £1,000 and 1/12th of the residue each to the Cancer Research Campaign and RNV, and 1/12th of the residue each to Artistic Care, Age Concern England, Barnardos, British Red Cross Society, Parkinson's Disease Society, Menion, National Asthma Campaign, National Society for Epilepsy and Sense.

Other estates include (net, before tax paid):

Mr Trevor John Allen, of Markfield, Leicestershire £582,049

Mr Robert Campbell Allison, of Quarndon, Derbyshire £770,318

Mr Dirk Gerardus Degenhart, of Bromley, Kent £639,311

Mr Thomas Samuel Leslie Morriam, of Chichester, West Sussex £1,268,018

Mr Trevor Hugh Foster, of Ladbroke, Wiltshire £871,524

Mr John Douglas Hamilton, of Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire £633,535

Mr Edwin Francis Martin, of Honiton, Devon £734,327

Mr John Morris, of Newquay, Cornwall £506,275

Mr Alfred Robert Reddin, of Epsom Downs, Surrey £573,798

Mr David Cristdale Robinson, of Bromborough, Cheshire £586,949

Evelyn Routledge Smith, of Harrow, north London £737,372

Mr John Ernest Wilson, of Tonbridge, Kent £580,330

Mr David William Lindsay Balfour, of London SE5 £634,955

Mrs Yvonne Constance Belsaver, of Eynsham, Oxon £611,033

Helena Mary Carmichael, of Pickering, North Yorks £611,571

Mr George Charlton, of Flyte Me, Co Durham £752,033

## DEATH OF MISS BRADDON.

"LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET."

We regret to record the death of Miss Braddon (Mrs. John Maxwell), the author of "Lady Audley's Secret" and a great number of other admirable novels, which took place at Lichfield House, Richmond, yesterday, in her 78th year.

Mary Elizabeth Braddon was born in 1837 in Soho-square, the daughter of Henry Braddon, a solicitor, and a member of an old Cornish professional family. She early showed a turn for writing, and by the time she was 18 she appears to have been a fairly regular contributor to a Brighton newspaper, helped thereby by a lad of her own age, one William Sawyer, employed on the paper. It is on record that the curious but purely literary friendship between the two went so far that they came up to London together, determined to try their fortune, and that they made a compact to divide the profit of whatever work either of them should first produce with any success. Sawyer remained a journalist, but Mary Braddon worked hard at plays and stories, and in 1860 her comedietta, *The Loves of Arcadia*, was produced at the Strand Theatre. In the same year she brought out a

ON THIS DAY  
February 5 1915

Mary Elizabeth Braddon (1837-1915), perhaps the most consistent of the Victorian best-selling authors, began writing in her teens. Long after *Lady Audley's Secret* had made her a household name and, later, she continued writing both novels and plays.

novel, "The Trail of the Serpent," and in 1861 a volume of verse, "Garibaldi and other Poems," which may be commended to those who collect the *Juvenilia* of celebrated writers.

In 1862 Miss Braddon suddenly found herself famous, for "Lady Audley's Secret," which we believe had been running through the pages of the *London Journal*, was published and made a furor. It hit the taste of the moment exactly: edition after edition was called for, and the papers were full of the new novelist and of the new type of story which she was thought to have created.

The book did not attempt to compete with

the great novels of the time — with Thackeray, or the late works of Dickens, or "Adam Bede," or "Richard Feverel." But it appealed with astonishing success to the multitude of readers who love a story and a mystery; and Miss Braddon deserves infinite credit for having been the first of her generation to satisfy this taste in a manner at once strong and simple. Critical readers laughed when they found *Lady Audley*, the mistress of a great country house, carving cold pheasant in September, or when the hero went out trout fishing, and sat by the stream "idly watching his float"; but little scepticisms of that kind made no difference to the great public, who breathlessly followed the author as she unravelled the "secret," and thus gave them a thrill such as no novelist of that day had been able to provide.

The real marvel of Miss Braddon's achievement, and her substantial title to fame, lies in the fact that her gift of invention served her through a long life, and that the stream, like the widow's curse, never ran dry. For more than 50 years she went on writing, and up to her acknowledged works mounts up to some 75 novels, all of the regulation length, and all marked by the same qualities that have captivated the public in "Lady Audley." Miss Braddon married her publisher, the late Mr. John Maxwell.



## NEWS

## Portillo apology for 'cheating' gaffe

Michael Portillo was forced into an embarrassing retraction after remarks accusing other countries of corruption and of selling educational qualifications.

The Treasury chief secretary launched an urgent damage limitation exercise after what he later admitted were "incautious" remarks to 400 Conservative students at Southampton university. Page 1

## Germans to bid for British Coal

A huge German conglomerate is preparing to bid for British Coal — four days after BMW announced its Rover deal. Germany's Veba group has joined the Union of Democratic Mineworkers and an American deep-mining group. Page 1

## Laboratory danger

Potentially dangerous cancer research has been going on for two years at Birmingham before the laboratory was closed. Pages 1, 5

## Bids war

A bidding war broke out for *The Independent* newspapers after Tony O'Reilly, the head of Heinz, trumped an earlier bid from the Mirror group. Page 1

## Wrong lead

Barbara Woodhouse, Britain's best-known dog trainer, was blamed for creating a generation of damaged pets. Pages 1, 4

## Benefits clamp

Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, announced a clampdown on foreign tourists claiming British benefits. Page 2

## Priest blackmailed

The former mistress of a Catholic priest was convicted of blackmailing him with threats to expose their 22-year affair. Page 3

## Bed and Bard

An historian in Wales believes that he has found two new poems by Shakespeare — written in a commonplace book for a wealthy family 400 years ago. Tom Lloyd-Roberts maintains that Shakespeare wrote the poems while staying with Sir John Salusbury in Lhwenni, Cilywd, in the winter of 1593. Page 3

## Teenager held

The teenager who went on a £7,000 African trip was given a new supervision order when he admitted four charges. Page 4

## Rioters hunted

Scotland Yard detectives will travel to every police force in Britain to try to find the 80 rioters at the battle between police and anti-Nazi protesters. Page 6

## Good old days

Baroness Thatcher was guest of honour at a gala marking Ronald Reagan's 83rd birthday. It felt like the good old days. Page 13

## Mandela warning

Nelson Mandela, president of the African National Congress, told whites that they were betraying their children by not admitting white violence. Page 12

## Fishing fight

Two thousand Breton fishermen fought pitched battles with riot police in Rennes. Page 10



The Prince of Wales inspecting members of the Light Horse Regiment during a visit to Enoggera Barracks, Brisbane. Observers say that his Australian tour has been a success. Today he goes to New Zealand. Page 7

## OPINION

**Academic disease:** The possibility that human error might have unleashed a cancer-carrying virus in a major city should alert science faculties to the need for more stringent self-regulation. Page 15

**Good morning Vietnam:** At long last, America and Vietnam may now come together to set aside their traumas and heal their history. Page 15

**Fantasy eleven:** Cricket is not like other sports. Soccer arouses passions. Page 15

## PAPERS

**What Americans saw** was Mr Adams putting on a terrible show. He may have won sympathy in some quarters but he fudged and equivocated. He abused his opportunity. — *The Washington Post*

## COLUMNS

**ANTHONY HOWARD:** What has gone wrong between the Labour Party and the intellectuals since the days of AJP Taylor? Page 14

**SARAH BAXTER:** One of the best-kept secrets in the House of Commons is the number of women MPs with family ties at Westminster. Page 14

## LETTERS

Where is the British sense of identity and history? Page 15

## OBITUARIES

**Dr Marie-Andrée Weill-Halle,** founder of the French Family Planning Association; Anona Winn, Twenty Questions panelist; Dom Columba Cary-Elwes, monk; Ernest Shanks, former Deputy Bailiff of Guernsey. Page 17

**Going live:** Granada's proposed bid for LWT and Carlton's takeover of Central were given the go-ahead by the Department of Trade and Industry. Page 19

**US hike:** The Federal Reserve's open market committee decided unanimously to tighten American reins for the first time in five years, raising the key Fed Funds rate by a quarter point to 3.35 per cent. Alan Greenspan, the chairman, said the aim was to sustain and enhance recovery. Page 19

**Markets:** The FT-SE 100 share index fell 16.1 to 3,475.4, undermined by Wall Street losses. The Sterling index fell to 81.7 after the pound fell 56 cents to \$1.4924 and 29 pence to DM2.5904. Page 22

**Rugby Union:** England begin their five nations' championship programme with the Calcutta Cup match against Scotland at Murrayfield today. Wales try to build on their opening victory against Ireland. Pages 35, 36

**Boxing:** Chris Eubank defends his super-middleweight title against Graciano Rocchigiani, of Germany, in Berlin tonight. Eubank appears to have underestimated his opponent. Page 34

**Golf:** Nick Faldo missed the halfway cut in the Johnnie Walker Classic in Thailand. It was only the third time in three years he has failed to complete a European Tour tournament. Bernhard Langer and Fred Couples share the lead. Page 32

## SATURDAY TIMES

## VISION

**Boomers:** Baby Monthly follows five women and their babies during the first year of life. Page 3

**Dandelion and Hay:** Dandelion Dead, a real-life mystery, has opened old wounds in Hay-on-Wye. Page 5

## WEEKEND

**Sober secrets:** An insider's view of a secret and powerful club — Alcoholics Anonymous. Is it a hunting ground for sexual predators or simply the smartest club in town? Page 1

**Down to earth:** Meet the new chairman of Gardeners' Question Time. Page 1

**Oriental promise:** The Times Cook finds supermarkets that supply inspiration for celebrating the Chinese New Year. Page 5

**Marathon journey:** how members of the Times team are shaping up in the final stages of their preparation for the London Marathon. Page 8

## WEEKEND ARTS

**It's a wrap:** Christo, the conceptual artist known for wrapping up islands and canyons in thousands of metres of fabric, is within an inch of wrapping the Reichstag in Berlin. Page 16

**Renaissance revel:** They stopped the Roman traffic for a British choir to mark the 400th anniversary of Palestrina's death. Page 16

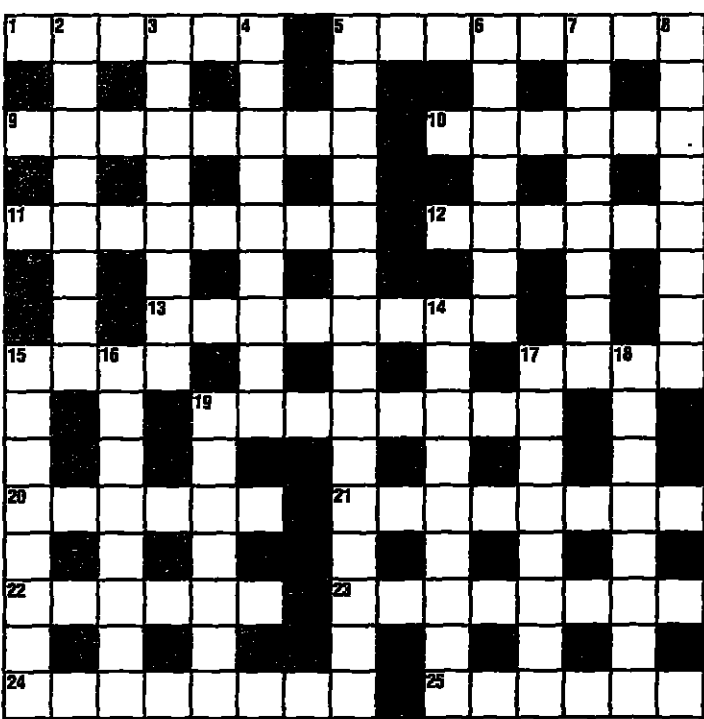
**Izzard in full flight:** One moment the subject is the odd propensity of dust to defy Newton by flying upwards, then it is transvestism, then vases, then gossip; and all without obvious reason. Let alone rhyme. Benedict Nightingale reviews comedian Eddie Izzard's West End show. Page 16

## THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,458

## KNOCKANDO

A bottle of Knockando, a superb Speyside Single Malt Scotch whisky uniquely bottled only when at its peak of perfection rather than at a pre-determined age, together with a beautifully crafted stationary rack, will be given for the first time to the winner of the crossword competition. Entries should be addressed to: The Times Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address



## ACROSS

- Things built by this practice are to one's specifications (6)
- Grape-juice a rebel imported to make wine (8)
- Anxieties about politician's abilities (8)
- Hook, perhaps, or crook (6)
- Furtive way to enter (4-4)
- To put things straight, ought to express agreement (6)
- Sports display is cancelled (5,3)
- Pretend to publish a retraction for some incorrect idea (4)
- The joint for a sailor without a name? (4)
- An argument against the pursuit of victory... (8)
- ... gives rise to the same points about security (6)
- Wild yarn, circulated privately (8)
- Language student abandoning French — English taken instead (6)
- Carpet bag found on vessel (4-4)
- Forcibly remove a hooligan (8)
- Run a hierarchical organisation (6)

## DOWN

- Lady hit journalist with no less force (8)
- Sherry, originally in the wood, is most cloudy (8)
- Swot up on surgical procedure and look after old travel writer (5,4)
- Powerful lady in a hurry to become hostess of the Boar's Head in Eastcheap (8,7)
- I got into many a quarrel — that's despicable (7)
- Money from overseas made arch-bishop answer (8)
- Upper-class youngster in sporting assembly rising to the top (8)
- Let go and follow closely, hugging west coast (9)
- The ability to see a positive response in the crew (8)
- Secretly disconcerted American (2,6)
- Formal shuffle of the cards (8)
- Praise for Kentish fire (8)
- Hypocrisy in a foreign wine-shop (7)

## Solution to Puzzle No 19,452

BROADSHEET M M  
E U E N AMPERE  
LATTICED K R A  
S U O GRIMAGES  
O M N A U U  
A N O N DUMWAITER  
C A B E H T E  
C O U L T E R O T A M O N  
U A S P T O I  
S T R I P T A S E C O S Y  
A B N P C C  
T O O L S H E D A Y  
I A E O P P O S I T E  
V E R G E R E I H  
E D D E A D R I N G E R

## Solution to Puzzle No 19,457

CHUTES SHAMBLES  
E R O T O O E  
C R I T E R I A P L O V E R  
B E T N L E G  
N A I L B R A D G I L L I E  
R A E I F O A  
L I G H T S E Y  
T A M E G O S K I T  
H U V E L O C I T Y R  
O S I V T B R  
U N H O L Y A R O M A T I C  
S R L T R R G  
A N O R A K I N I M I C A L  
N O I O A T T  
D O M I N I O N N I E D E R

## TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0891 500 followed by the appropriate code.

Greater London	701
East of London	702
West of London	703
Devon & Cornwall	704
Wales, Wales, Wales	705
Wales, Wales, Wales	706
Wales, Wales, Wales	707
Wales, Wales, Wales	708
Wales, Wales, Wales	709
Wales, Wales, Wales	710
Wales, Wales, Wales	711
Wales, Wales, Wales	712
Wales, Wales, Wales	713
Wales, Wales, Wales	714
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Wales, Wales, Wales	718
Wales, Wales, Wales	719
Wales, Wales, Wales	720
Wales, Wales, Wales	721
Wales, Wales, Wales	722
Wales, Wales, Wales	723
Wales, Wales, Wales	724
Wales, Wales, Wales	725
Wales, Wales, Wales	726
Wales, Wales, Wales	727
Wales, Wales, Wales	728
Wales, Wales, Wales	729
Wales, Wales, Wales	730

## AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and road-work information, 24 hours a day, dial 0300 470 followed by the appropriate code.

London & SE traffic, roadworks	731
Area within M25	732
East of London	733
West of London	734
M25 London Central only	735
National traffic and roadworks	736
West Country	737
Wales	738
Midlands	739
East of London	740
North-west England	741
North-east England	742
Scotland	743
North Ireland	744
AA Roadwatch is charged at 36p per minute (cheapest rate) and 40p per minute at all other times.	

## HOURS OF DARKNESS

**TODAY**  
Sun rises 7:35 am Sun sets 4:57 pm  
Moon rises 11:52 am Moon rises 3:28 am

**TOMORROW**  
Sun rises 7:31 am Sun sets 4:59 pm  
Moon rises 12:51 pm Moon rises 4:27 am

**NEW MOON FEBRUARY 10**  
London 4:57 pm to 7:34 am  
Bristol 5:07 pm to 7:44 am  
Edinburgh 5:54 pm to 8:30 am  
Manchester 4:59 pm to 7:46 am  
Penzance 5:23 pm to 7:49 am

**NEW MOON FEBRUARY 10**  
London 4:59 pm to 7:31 am  
Bristol 5:30 pm to 7:41 am  
Edinburgh 5:57 pm to 7:58 am  
Manchester 5:01 pm to 7:46 am  
Penzance 5:23 pm to 7:49 am

**HIGH TIDES**  
TODAY  
London Bridge 4:23 AM 4:11 PM 4:11 PM 4:11 PM  
Aberdeen 4:30 AM 4:38 PM 4:38 PM 4:38 PM  
Belfast 4:34 AM 4:42 PM 4:42 PM 4:42 PM  
Cardiff 4:38 AM 4:46 PM 4:46 PM 4:46 PM  
Dover 4:42 AM 4:50 PM 4:50 PM 4:50 PM  
Falmouth 4:46 AM 4:54 PM 4:54 PM 4:54 PM  
Glasgow 4:50 AM 4:58 PM 4:58 PM 4:58 PM  
Hull 4:54 AM 5:02 PM 5:02 PM 5:02 PM  
Liverpool 4:58 AM 5:06 PM 5:06 PM 5:06 PM  
London 5:02 AM 5:10 PM 5:10 PM 5:10 PM  
Manchester 5:06 AM 5:14 PM 5:14 PM 5:14 PM  
Penzance 5:10 AM 5:18 PM 5:18 PM 5:18 PM  
Plymouth 5:14 AM 5:22 PM 5:22 PM 5:22 PM  
Portsmouth 5:18 AM 5:26 PM 5:26 PM 5:26 PM  
Sheffield 5:22 AM 5:30 PM 5:30 PM 5:30 PM  
Southampton 5:26 AM 5:34 PM 5:34 PM 5:34 PM  
Swansea 5:30 AM 5:38 PM 5:38 PM 5:38 PM  
Tees 5:34 AM 5:42 PM 5:42 PM 5:42 PM  
Wrexham 5:38 AM 5:46 PM 5:46 PM 5:46 PM

**THE WINNERS OF LAST SATURDAY'S COMPETITION**  
are: N Swale, Derby Road, St Marys, Southampton; B Benson, Dunes Road, Greatstone, New Romney, Kent; A R Von-Twickel, Warwick Way, London; D E W Morgan, Halsteads, Duke Street, Settle, North Yorkshire; J H Brain, Chichester Road, Croydon.

## FORECAST

General: England and Wales will have a mild day in a southerly breeze. Showers will be confined mostly to the west with central parts having the best of any sunshine. Eastern coastal regions may stay rather dull. In the evening, more general rain will reach the South-West. Meanwhile, Scotland and Northern Ireland will be rather cloudy and windy. Showery rain is expected in most places, apart from eastern Scotland which will be mostly dry.

London, SE England, E Anglia, E England, N E England, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee: Mainly dry. Cloudy at times. Wind south to south-east, moderate. Max 9C (48F).

Central S England, E Midlands, W Midlands, Channel Isles, Central N: Mostly dry. Sunny spells. Wind south moderate. Max 9C (48F).

SW England, S Wales, N Wales, N W England, Lake District, Isle of Man: Bright spells with showers, which will be more prolonged later. Wind south to south-west moderate to fresh. Max 9C (48F).

Aberdeen, Moray Firth, N E Scotland: Patchy drizzle. Wind south-east strong. Max 6C (43F).

SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll, N W Scotland, N Ireland: Rather cloudy. Showery rain. Wind south-west fresh. Max 7C (45F).

Orkney, Shetland: Wet and windy. Wind south-east strong. Max 6C (43F).

Outlook: rain spreading eastwards tomorrow, followed by showers on Monday.

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## AROUND BRITAIN

MONDAY, 1=thunder, 2=drizzle, 3= fog, 4= snow, 5= sleet, 6= rain, 7= hail, 8= sun, 9= clear, 10= sun & clouds, 11= sun & rain, 12= sun & snow, 13= sun & sleet, 14= sun & hail, 15= sun & rain & snow, 16= sun & rain & sleet, 17= sun & rain & hail, 18= sun & rain & snow & sleet, 19= sun & rain & snow & hail, 20= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail, 21= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun, 22= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun & rain, 23= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun & rain & snow, 24= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun & rain & snow & rain, 25= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun & rain & snow & rain & snow, 26= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun & rain & snow & rain & snow & rain, 27= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun & rain & snow & rain & snow & rain & snow, 28= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun & rain & snow & rain & snow & rain & snow & rain, 29= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun & rain & snow & rain & snow & rain & snow & rain & snow, 30= sun & rain & snow & sleet & hail & sun & rain & snow & rain & snow & rain & snow & rain & snow & rain.

London 0.8 0.35 11 52 r

Lowestoft 0.2 0.4 8 43 r

Manchester 0.2 0.12 7 45 r

Margate 0.57 9 48 r

Northwich 0.32 5 41 r

Newbury 0.46 7 45 r

Nottingham 0.31 7 45 r

Penzance 0.2 10 50 r

Plymouth 2.7 0.85 10 50 r

Pool 3.5 0.90 11 52 r

Southampton 1.5 0.70 10 50 r

Salisbury 0.2 0.4 8 43 r

Scarborough 0.2 0.4 8 43 r

Southend 0.2 0.4 8 43 r

Stoke-on-Trent 0.2 0.4 8 43 r

Swansea 0.2 0.4 8 43 r

Torquay 0.2 0.4 8 43 r

Weymouth 0.





PROFILE 21

Scottish Nuclear's men with an industrial mission



MELVYN MARCKUS 20

Our City Editor highlights the pensions scandal



SPORT 30-36

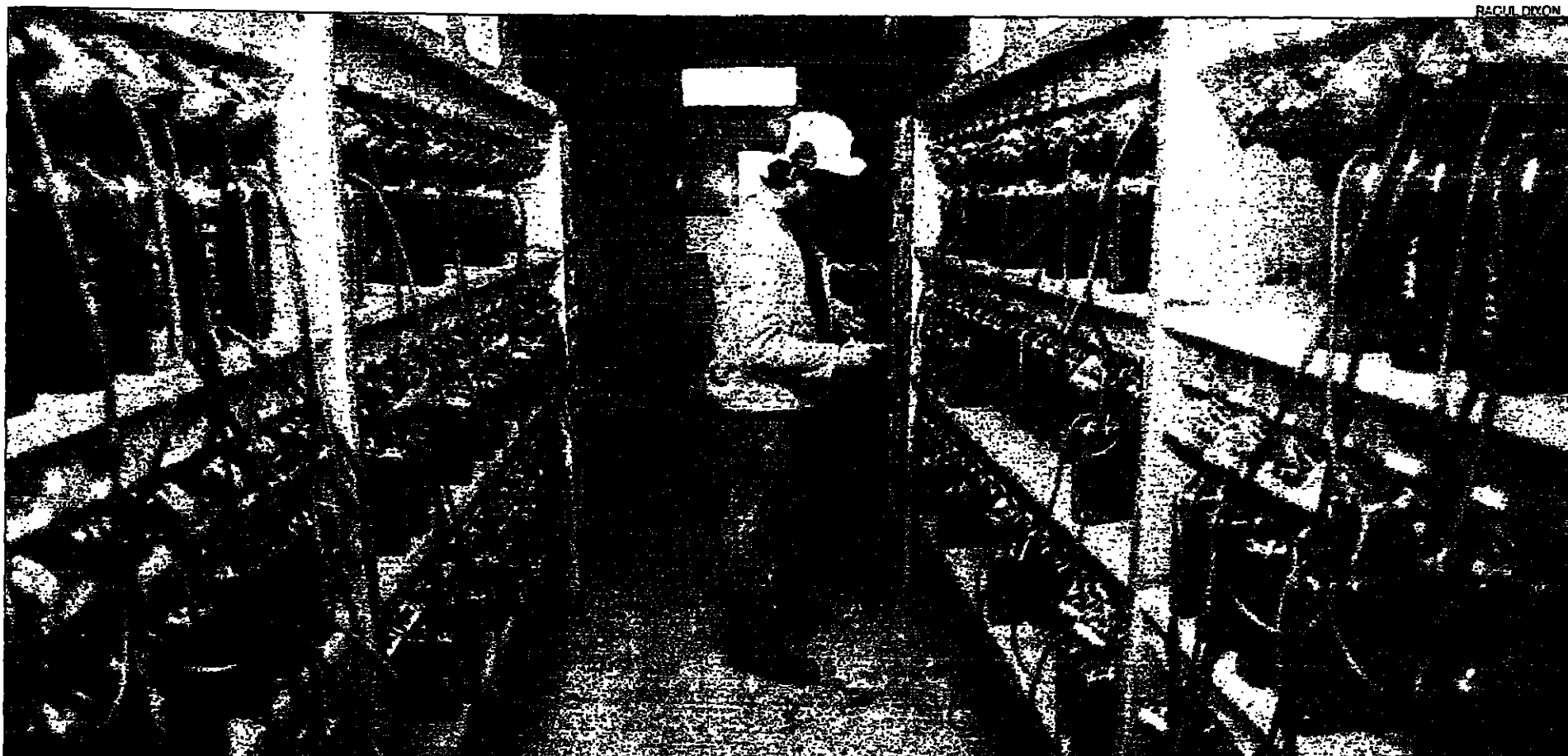
Eubank playing for high stakes in Berlin

WEEKEND SPORTING FIXTURES  
Page 31

# THE TIMES

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 5 1994

RK



A miner at Ellington Colliery, Northumberland, who learnt after the end of his shift yesterday that the pit was to close. Ellington is the last deep mine in the North East

## British Coal to shut four more pits

By ROSS TIEMAN  
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Coal has confirmed plans to close four more pits, with the loss of 3,050 jobs. The closures, forecast in *The Times* yesterday, will reduce the corporation's underground workforce to fewer than 11,000 and the number of deep mines to 16. That is three fewer than British Coal planned to keep open in October 1992, when it unveiled a 31-pit closure programme that brought massive protests. Since then, 29,000 miners and more than 3,000 staff and surface auxiliary workers have been shed.

British Coal said the closures were necessary to bring output into line with falling demand from National Power and PowerGen. Demand for coal-fired electricity has been squeezed by rising nuclear output and construction of gas-burning plants. The decision to close Ellington Colliery, near Morpeth, Northumberland, ends centuries of deep mining in the North East. Eddy Hindmarsh, British Coal's head of operations, said that Ellington, which employs 1,100 below ground, was suffering rising losses because of geological problems. "There is no prospect of viable operations in the present, near or long-term future," he said.

The corporation said it would close three Nottinghamshire pits: Annesley, Ollerton and Manton. John Longdon, the Midlands group director, told miners that closures last year had brought production only briefly into line with falling demand. "We have no option but to take out further capacity," he said. Production at all three pits is expected to cease on February 18. Miners will be able to apply for redundancy, worth up to £37,000 for those with long service, or for transfer to another pit.

German bid, page 1

BUSINESS EDITOR  
Robert Ballantyne

## WEEKEND MONEY

### WIDER FARE



High street shops and supermarkets offer a growing range of financial services, with everything from credit cards to pensions  
Page 25

### BOND BEATER

Building societies believe they can beat the Government's new bond when it comes to pensioners' savings  
Page 25

### COSTLY COVER



Owners of antiques, silver and paintings could lose out under new-style insurance policies  
Page 24

### SALES SLUMP

Scandals in the pensions industry have caused a dramatic loss of confidence among potential clients  
Page 26

## US rates rise for first time in 5 years

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU  
IN WASHINGTON

THE Federal Reserve's open market committee raised US interest rates for the first time in five years. The timing of the decision, which was taken unanimously, took financial markets by surprise.

The raising of the federal funds rate — an overnight rate — from about 3 per cent to 3.25 per cent, is intended to strengthen perceptions in financial markets that the Fed is again in command of monetary policy.

The increase was announced in an open statement by Alan Greenspan, the Fed's chairman, an almost unprecedented event that caused nearly as much surprise as the decision itself. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 40 points on the news, but made up some of the loss later. At midday, the Dow was 28.98 points down at 3,938.68. The rate rise pushed the dollar higher. Against the mark, it was up more than a pfennig, at DM 1.7523.

The rate rise came amid increasing optimism about the economy, the strength of which was underlined by yet another fall in the unemployment rate. This was 6.3 per cent in January, down 0.1 per cent.

Senior Clinton Administration officials argued that the rate rise would not have a significant impact on long-term rates, which indirectly determine the cost of mortgages. Lloyd Bentsen, the Treasury Secretary, called the decision "a pre-emptive strike". Laura Tyson, chairman of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers, said the new short-term rates were consistent with present long-term rates.

Bank lending, page 20  
Stock market, page 22

# O'Reilly dawn raid nets 24.99% of Independent

By MARTIN WALLER  
DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

A BREATHTAKING "dawn raid" by Tony O'Reilly, the Irish publisher, yesterday netted a 24.99 per cent stake in the company that produces *The Independent* and effectively shut out a rival £5.05 million bid from Mirror Group Newspapers, tabling only a few hours earlier.

Hoare Govett, Dr O'Reilly's broker, went to City institutions holding 53 per cent of the title and its Sunday sister the *Independent on Sunday*, and offered them 250p a share. That offer was pitched almost £1 above the terms of the MGN bid, which has the backing of the two other big single shareholders in Newspaper Publishing, the Spanish and Italian groups that own *El Pais* and *La Repubblica*.

Dr O'Reilly set his sights on a 24.99 per cent stake, just below the level that would have triggered a monopolies enquiry, at a cost of £18.4 million. Reaction among the City shareholders, most of whom paid £1 for their initial holdings when the paper was launched in 1986, was immediately favourable, some reports suggesting all those approached were willing to sell.

Dr O'Reilly's Independent Newspapers, publisher of the unrelated *Irish Independent*, is *The Independent*'s biggest single shareholder, outranking the Spanish and Italians. Executives were last night cloistered with Newspaper Publishing management. High on the agenda was a much-needed injection of cash into Newspaper Publishing.

Neil Blackley, media analyst at Goldman Sachs, said:

"It's quite a smart move — it's really taken the wind out of the MGN sails. *El Pais* and *La Repubblica* now have to take O'Reilly seriously. I think he's in prime position."

Brendan Hopkins, managing director of international operations at the Irish group, said his company had succeeded in their original aim. "We've got a significant say in the future of Newspaper Publishing. We're continuing our

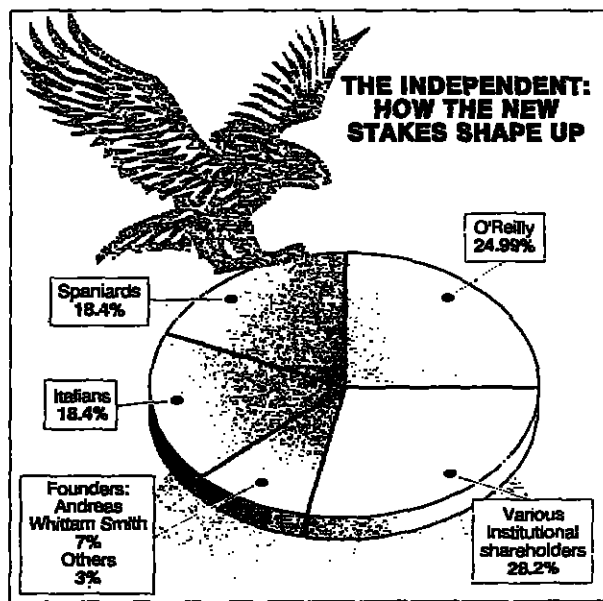
discussions with the board. We will be working with the company to restore its fortunes." The Irish will now seek two seats on the company's board of directors.

Mr Hopkins said *Independent* staff should be "euphoric" over the new shareholding. A statement from Newspaper Publishing welcomed its new shareholder and said early discussions would be sought with the Italians and Spanish.

An earlier approach by Dr O'Reilly, involving a similar shareholding and a £21 million cash injection, expired on Thursday night, just hours before the MGN bid. Mr Hopkins said financial help could be provided but would not comment on whether that cash promise would be repeated. He added: "That's a matter for discussion at this stage." He would also not be drawn on any plans for his group to increase its holding further.

The offer from the Mirror consortium is of £77.94 in cash and 96,663 new MGN shares for every 100 in Newspaper Publishing, valuing the latter at 261.6p, and there is a 250p cash alternative. The bid remains on the table.

A spokesman for the Spanish owner of *El Pais* said the group would not be selling its shares to Dr O'Reilly even if



## Heseltine gives go-ahead to Granada

By SUSAN GILCHRIST

THE clock has started ticking again on Granada Group's hostile bid for LWT after Michael Heseltine, the President of the Board of Trade, gave the deal the green light.

He said he had decided not to refer Granada's offer for LWT nor Carlton Communications' acquisition of Central Independent Television to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. He said he had accepted undertakings by Carlton and Granada that the proposed deals would not give

them more than a quarter of ITV advertising revenue.

The companies have agreed to divest all or part of their shares in sales houses and terminate sales contracts to comply with a 25 per cent threshold and have been given a deadline of August 31, 1995.

However, the limit can be breached by a small amount to allow smaller regional ITV companies to sell their airtime alongside that of larger companies. Gerry Robinson, chief executive of Granada, said Mr

Heseltine's decision had cleared the last obstacle out of the way. He said he was particularly pleased by the setting of the threshold at 25 per cent and the length of time Granada had been given to comply.

However, the future of Laser, LWT's sales operation, remains unclear should Granada's bid succeed. Together Laser and The Time Exchange, the sales house for Granada, Scottish Television, Grampian and Border, would have 31 per cent of network

revenue. But Mr Robinson said the decision of the Director-General of Fair Trading to allow the threshold to be breached to protect smaller companies might apply in this case.

Sir Christopher Bland, LWT's chairman, disagreed: "Granada appears to be required either to abandon... The Time Exchange or break LWT's five-year contract with Yorkshire-Tyne Tees."

Tempus, page 21

STOCK MARKET		THE POUND		GOLD	
FT-SE 100 3475.4 -16.1	DOW JONES 3938.68 -28.98	Dm 2.5904 -0.0029	US \$ 1.4924 -0.0056	\$385.05 per oz.	BRENT CRUDE \$14.55 per barrel (Mar) 6pm
Midday trading figure					

LONDON CLOSING PRICES

MARKETS IN DETAIL PAGE 22, SHARE PRICES PAGE 29

# NEWTON

9% per annum

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## A pensions sermon from St Michael

Timing, it is said by some, is everything. I wouldn't go quite that far but instances of timing can, most certainly, cause embarrassment for certain parties and, depending on your standpoint, prompt considerable amusement. Such an instance came last Tuesday when Marks and Spencer disclosed, to an unsuspecting financial community, that it intends to expand its range of financial products into the life assurance and pensions arena.

It was, of course, sheer coincidence that M&S's revelation came within 24 hours of allegations that the Government ignored warnings from the National Association of Pension Funds, almost a decade ago, of the dangers of permitting personal pensions to be sold by a "self-regulated" life assurance industry.

In the mid-Eighties, when personal pensions legislation was under consideration by Sir Norman Fowler, during his reign as Social Services Sec-

retary, warnings that sales agents should be the subject of strict controls, to prevent abuse, appear to have fallen on stony ground. In the wake of a Government Green Paper in the autumn of 1985, the NAFP wrote: "Stringent investor protection is essential if the proposals for personal pensions are to gain any semblance of public acceptability." The thrust of the NAFP's argument was that plans under way for self-regulation of the insurance industry were inadequate.

This little vignette must be seen in the context of last December's disclosure that 400,000 out of 500,000 individuals who transferred out of occupational pension schemes into personal pension plans — following the Government's introduction of tax incentives in July 1988 — may have received "inadequate advice." This matter, which came to light in a pilot study published by accountants KPMG Peat Marwick, is currently the subject of an investigation by the Securities & Investments Board, politely described as the City's chief regulatory watchdog. Impolitely perceived as a bureaucratic Pekinese. The message from Andrew Large, chairman of SIB, is that regulators will use their powers to ensure "appropriate remedies" and those who have been ill-advised will be given the option of "satisfactory alternative arrangements."

Transparency is a word much in vogue but, unsurprisingly, the public is still waiting for SIB to identify the guilty parties, namely the pension providers. These, for the most part, are the life offices — embracing the life assurance companies — the clearing banks and the building societies. As I argued last December, the life offices, like the Government, will attempt to play down the "new pensions for old" scandal with blame, almost assuredly, falling on the "sales agents." Such agents tend to

come in three guises: those employed by the pension provider; those who fall into the category of "tied agents" and a variety known as "independent financial advisers" whose bites are occasionally fatal. Fimbria, the supposed regulator of the species, swats its members (*à la* Roger Levitt) like flies; so much so that a casual observer is left to wonder quite why the window



MELVYN MARKKUS

was left wide open in the first place. Just to put the sloth of government and self-regulation in perspective, the NAFP is understood to have recommended several of the measures which Government officials — almost a decade later — now believe are necessary to protect consumers. Such as: full disclosure by the life offices of fees and charges (including sales agents' commissions) and the disclosure of penalties in respect of early policy surrenders.

Mick Newmarch, chief executive of the Prudential, one of the UK's largest pension providers, has already emphasised that although the company is committed to compensating the "handful" of consumers who may have received poor advice from its 8,000 strong direct sales force, it sees no reason to assume responsibility for any wrongful sales of the company's products by Fimbria's members.

Newmarch has, for more than a year, waged war against the current mode of self-regulation. In his words: "The Financial Services Act is an unsatisfactory basis for the adequate protection of savers. The implementation of the Act was bold and well intentioned but the Government should now acknowledge that the experiment has failed and begin to organise investor protection on a fully statutory basis under direct Government control."

By way of welcoming the Government's anti-red tape crusade, Newmarch declared, last November: "I have yet to meet anyone who seriously expects this ramshackle Financial Services Act edifice to survive the next ten years. If the Government are serious about eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy, they must establish that investor protection cannot be measured by the thickness of rulebooks."

Nor has the self-regulatory cause been furthered by the fiasco over the creation of the

Personal Investment Authority, the latest drama involving the resignation of Jim Sretton, deputy managing director of Standard Life, in protest against the proposal that only nine of the PLA's 19 directors will be industry practitioners. Joe Palmer, chairman of the PLA and former chief executive of Legal & General, insists there is no need to "tear up the system and start again." Just for good measure, Sir Bryan Carsberg, Director-General of the Office of Fair Trading, recently let it be known that lapse rates probably represent "the biggest unexposed issue in life assurance."

M&S do not go in for spin doctors: it has its own way of making a point. "Highly trained financial advisers" will be paid by "salary only" with "no sales incentive or commissions." Similarly, M&S's associate, Equitable Life, has traditionally shunned commission inspired sales techniques. Something of a sermon from St Michael.

## BAe makes £250m aircraft provision

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Aerospace is clearing the way to inject its loss-making turboprop business into a joint venture with an overseas rival by taking £250 million of financial provisions against losses on lease contracts.

The restructuring has been facilitated by the sale of BAe's 80 per cent stake in the Rover car company to BMW of Germany for £800 million, announced on Monday.

Rover's borrowing needs, BAe's inadequate balance sheet and the Rover sale negotiations have held back action to resolve problems of Jetstream Aircraft, its subsidiary in Scotland.

BAe, where Dick Evans is chief executive, is now keen to be seen to be moving quickly to address Jetstream's losses,

which were running at £1 million a month in the first half of last year.

Richard Lapthorne, BAe's finance director, said that the provisions would complete the revision of the way BAe manages its second-hand aircraft fleets and their associated leasing exposures.

The provisions will be charged against BAe's accounts for the year to December 1993. A preliminary announcement on February 23 is now expected to reveal a pre-tax loss of about £160 million, rather than the previously expected £50 million profit.

But the write-offs, joint ventures and the shedding of 25,000 employees, almost a quarter of the workforce, over the past two years are expected to underpin a solid improve-

ment in profitability during 1994. Aided by a one-off profit on the Rover sale, profits this year are now expected to reach £650 million.

BAe has been crippled by huge losses on regional jet and turboprop aircraft built in its factories, sold to a bank, and leased through the manufacturer to operators.

A £1 billion provision in BAe's 1992 accounts enabled the company to sort out Avro International, its regional jet business, and get the 30 idle aircraft back in the air by cutting prices.

The latest provisions, allied to the creation of JSX, a special leasing company, are intended to clear a backlog of 50 idle Jetstream turboprops.

Tempus, page 21



Dick Evans, of BAe, which is making £250 million provision

## Receiver goes in at Clydeshaw

By COLIN NARBROUGH

CLYDESHAW, the last commodity steelmaker in Scotland, went into receivership yesterday, threatening the jobs of its 250-strong workforce.

The company, which is based at Craigneuk, near Motherwell, produces large-scale castings and ingots, and has an annual turnover of £12 million.

Ernst & Young, the firm of accountants, was called in as receiver by the company's banks after orders dried up and news that a leading customer is expected to close next month. Clydeshaw has debts of about £7 million.

John Readman, the receiver, said that unsecured creditors were unlikely to get any money unless the company was sold as a going concern. A possible trade sale is under discussion.

## Global airline passenger traffic increases by 6%

THE world airline industry saw passenger traffic grow 6 per cent last year, outstripping growth in capacity, but still failed to return to overall profitability, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Pierre Jeannot, IATA director-general, said traffic and capacity had showed encouraging trends for some months, but added "the problem for the airlines is not traffic but profits". In November, M Jeannot forecast a net loss for the industry of \$2.4 billion in 1993. Final figures are due next month.

Airline capacity, measured as the number of seats and freight volume provided by new aircraft coming on line, grew by 1.6 per cent last year, four times as much as expected. IATA officials said, however, that with the ratio between traffic and capacity moving in the right direction, there could be some grounds for optimism.

## Birse cuts loss

BIIRSE Group, whose financial position was transformed by December's share placing, says there is growing evidence of recovery in the plant-hire and housing market. In the six months to October 31, Birse Homes moved into operating profit for the first time. The group's pre-tax losses in the period were trimmed from £2.71 million to £1.4 million on a turnover of £197.3 million (£163.7 million). Again, no interim dividend is recommended. The shares stayed at 38½p.

## Lasmo calls off sale

LASMO, the troubled oil and gas exploration and production company, has withdrawn its interests in the Markham field in the North Sea from sale. Joe Darby, chief executive, said that Markham's value had increased through a combination of improved field performance and lower than expected costs. "We now intend to exploit fully the value of the Markham field and to develop the considerable potential of a number of satellite prospects in our adjoining acreage."

## Airlines move closer

AIR Canada would like to develop commercial arrangements with Air France into a shareholding. Claude Morin, Air Canada's director-general for France, said, Air France, which is due to be privatised and is in financial difficulties, and Air Canada made a strategic alliance in September 1992. The two companies decided to co-ordinate their flight times, market available seat capacity to the partner, and operate transatlantic flights from joint airport facilities.

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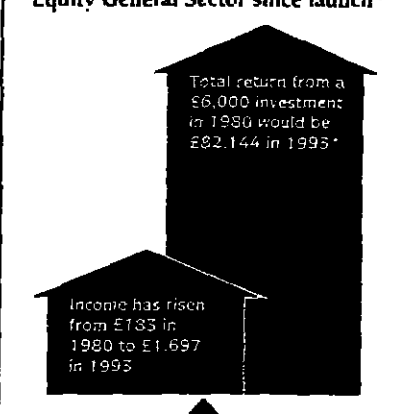
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The Henderson Income & Growth Trust is ranked 1st out of 49 trusts in the UK Equity General Sector since launch\*



unit trust only PEP, which allows you to invest up to £6,000 directly into this highly successful trust, free of tax on both income and capital gains.

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\*Source: Mirostat offer to bid, 3.3.90 to 31.12.93. Income is calculated net of basic rate tax, and the capital growth figure assumes net income reinvested. The comparative five year growth to 31.12.93 would be £11,074. Income figures — Source: Henderson.

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The president of Honda looked startled. We had a deal to increase our stake, he said. George Simpson, chairman of Rover, shrugged. This is a better deal, he replied. If you want to match it, or better it, then we can talk. But our board has decided to take BMW's money... Business — The Sunday Times tomorrow

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## SCOTTISH NUCLEAR: James Hann and Robin Jeffrey

## Atomic duo tackles a mission improbable

*partners in power*

The leaders of a company that is on the brink of insolvency see themselves as the saviours of the nuclear industry. Ross Tieman reports

James Hann and Robin Jeffrey have a mission: to "save the nuclear industry" in Britain. Given the abysmal commercial record of UK atomic power, many might wonder why. Their determination is all the more startling because Hann, the chairman, has no background in the industry, while Jeffrey, his chief executive, is every inch the management technocrat, for all his engineering expertise.

After this week's criticism of the industry's provisions for decommissioning from the powerful cross-party Commons Public Accounts Committee, their task looks tougher still. As the committee pointed out, if Scottish Nuclear fails to cut its costs, it will become technically bankrupt next year, without further support from the Scottish Office.

Yet the achievements of the pair at Scottish Nuclear have given ministers a pleasant surprise and fresh hope to ailing power's shrunken band of supporters. With insolvency looming, Hann and Jeffrey say they are starting to succeed where the Central Electricity Generating Board and the South of Scotland Electricity Board conspicuously failed, and to show that nuclear plants can be safe, efficient and economic.

They seem an unlikely pair to be running nuclear power stations. Hann bustles about the company's offices on the outskirts of East Kilbride in his cardigan, while Jeffrey has the manner of a man a decade or two younger than his 54 years. They are crisp and keen — refreshing, in an industry plagued by oddballs and zealots.

To comprehend the plight of Britain's nuclear industry, remember its history. A first programme of Magnox reactors, promising power "too cheap to meter", proved reliable but generated large quantities of waste. The plants are now coming to the end of their lives and will cost a fortune to tidy up, besides blighting the countryside for centuries. A second wave of Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors (AGRs) was a commercial disaster. Too many designs and ineffective project management caused huge delays and cost overruns. No wonder the technology failed to find a buyer abroad. In desperation, the CEBG began to develop a third type of plant, using American technology. But only Sizewell B, nearing completion on the Suffolk coast, has been ordered.

Mrs Thatcher planned to get shot of the lot by privatising the plants within National Power and Scottish Power. But the City turned its nose up and the Government was obliged to retain them, propped up by subsidy and must-take

contracts with their customers, in the public sector.

But with its horrendous costs and liabilities exposed, the industry faced change or lingering death. Under the privatisation arrangements for the electricity industry, a review of nuclear power in 1994 is to be followed by withdrawal of all remaining props and subsidies in 1998. Hann was hired by the Scottish Office in April 1990 to chair the newly created Scottish Nuclear company. It was a role few would relish. Nor was he an obvious choice. A sassenach, he had spent 18 years with Unigate, followed by 14 running an oil industry service and supply company out of Aberdeen. Scottish Nuclear was in for a shock. The scale of the impending change became clear a year later, when the chief executive decided to retire early and Hann stepped into his shoes until a replacement could be found.

Although Scottish Nuclear has only three plants, one of which is already being decommissioned, its importance to Scottish business and household consumers is enormous. Under pre-privatisation contracts, the quoted Scottish electricity utilities, ScottishPower and Scottish Hydro-Electric, are obliged to buy about half of their total needs from Scottish Nuclear. In England and Wales, nuclear power accounts for less than a quarter of consumption, and is propped up by a £9 billion a year subsidy. Hann had better tools to work with than his southern neighbours at Nuclear Electric.

**When I came, I found ingrained nuclear industry thinking. I knew deep down that had to change**

Scottish Nuclear's two functioning plants, Hunterston B, on the Firth of Clyde, and Torness, to the north of Berwick-upon-Tweed, are both relatively modern AGR stations. But although the operating record of the plants compared favourably with those elsewhere in Britain, the cost of the power they produced was still way above that from plants burning coal or gas. "When I came, I found deeply ingrained traditional nuclear industry thinking, not industrial thinking," Hann says. "I knew deep down that had to change if nuclear power was to be competitive."

Unburdened by involvement in four decades of nuclear history, he questioned everything. And when he heard the answers, he demanded alternative solutions. Fuel from a monopoly supplier, British Nuclear Fuels, accounted for half the company's costs, he learned. BNFL refused to cut prices for new fuel and for reprocessing spent fuel, to acceptable levels. Hann turned to his engineers. "The answers came from them," he says. In a move welcomed by environmentalists, Scottish Nuclear is seeking planning consent to dry-store spent fuel, while

elsewhere in Britain, the cost of the power they produced was still way above that from plants burning coal or gas. "When I came, I found deeply ingrained traditional nuclear industry thinking, not industrial thinking," Hann says. "I knew deep down that had to change if nuclear power was to be competitive."



Hann, left, and Jeffrey have developed a symbiotic relationship. "We are good at bouncing ideas back and forth, one to one," Hann says

looking overseas for new material. Hann sought to extend plants' operating lives to spread fixed costs and at the same time to prolong the decommissioning programme. Making the most of the assets and reducing contamination risk during decommissioning swung the profit and loss account the right way, too. The accounting cost of power in the year to March 1993 fell to 2.98p a unit. By next year, Hann hopes, that will be down to 2.5p and compare favourably with rival sources of electricity. The Public Accounts Committee, however, has questioned the basis of those costs.

Hann made one other key move. He hired Jeffrey as chief executive. Jeffrey, a Scot, joined Babcock & Wilcox, the Scottish boilermaker, from school in 1956, and was sponsored by the company in studying for an engineering degree. Then he did a PhD at Cambridge — "I went there to play badminton, squash and tennis, and to go to parties". Joining the South of Scotland Electricity Board in 1979, he headed the team that built the Torness station. At privatisation, Jeffrey was ordered to remain at ScottishPower, the non-nuclear business. He headed the project development team, evaluating proposals to build new gas-fired plants, until picked out by Hann. "He was clearly the number one choice," Hann says. Jeffrey had an intimate knowledge of nuclear power, of the Torness plant, and all the advantages of a private-sector background and commercial approach. He also supported the dry-store option.

The handover of executive responsi-

bility was accomplished elegantly in January 1992, when Hann took an extended break overseas. Since then, he and Jeffrey seem to have developed an unusually symbiotic relationship. "We work together on a plan," Hann says. "He then works it up into a position paper with his team, so we can present it to the board." Jeffrey's perception is similar. "We are good at bouncing ideas back and forth, one to one," he says.

Hann says Jeffrey has the technical expertise. "He has an extremely sharp mind... He is technically sound and managerially as well. And he is willing to take on board new techniques, new technologies, new ideas," Jeffrey describes Hann as "a pluralist, a very gifted

communicator. He is a businessman. He can identify what is bullshit and knows how to separate the important things from what is not important."

One suspects that Hann's intuitive leaps may, from time to time, try Jeffrey's patience. Interject a question into a Jeffrey answer and he sets it aside, maintaining course until he is finished before answering. Hann dismisses the googlies with more agility, but less thoroughly.

At the age of 61, James Hann still seems like a man seeking to prove himself. It is his younger acolyte who seems the more relaxed, the more confident. Together, though, they have achieved much.

But as the artificially high price Scottish Nuclear receives for its power falls back to

commercial levels, their task gets tougher every year. Jeffrey has embarked on a series of personal meetings with the company's 2,000 workers, 15 or 20 at a time, to explain why and how they plan to cut another £100 million from Scottish Nuclear's costs. It will mean another 145 staff lose their jobs over the coming 12 months and bring the nominal unit price of power close to target.

But the real challenge lies in the longer-term. Over the next ten years, Hann and Jeffrey aim to move Scottish Nuclear from the Treasury's 8 per cent rate of return to 15 per cent, comparable to the private sector. If they can achieve that, safely, they may indeed go a long way to restoring the nuclear industry's prospects.

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## TEMPUS

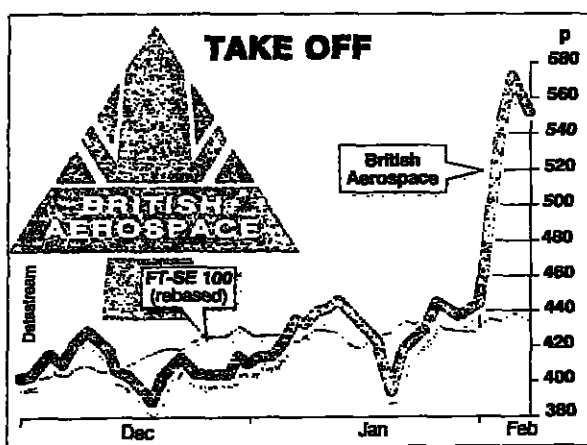
## Make your mind up time in Granada's blind date

THE endgame in Granada's bid for LWT has begun. The OFT's belated decision to agree Granada's proposals on advertising sales gives the two sides just over a week to marshal their arguments before Granada issues its final offer. Granada cannot be best pleased with the time the OFT has taken to make a decision, since the delay has cost it £800,000 a week in underwriting fees. It has been compensated by the bid being restarted on a Friday, which forces LWT to work this weekend to publish any more financial information before the Sunday deadline.

Granada would do well to announce its final offer as soon as possible next week. This affair has dragged on long enough. The question is how generous it needs to be to win. Any chance that Granada could win the bid without a final sweetener was killed by MAI's generous agreed bid for Anglia, which made Granada's offer look mean by comparison. Granada certainly has to improve its cash alternative and probably offer an increase in the overall offer as well. Granada certainly has the facilities to do this, and while LWT's management has put up an impressive struggle, the odds are against it.

## BAe

THE fact that British Aerospace would provide for its turboprop leasing fleet had become something of an open secret in the City. The only reason it was not announced



earlier is that BAe had to tidy the covenants on a few remaining bank loans, and complete a modest disposal called Rover.

The provision is another welcome step down the path to financial normality. It effectively recognises that some of the previous profits from the business were fictitious, since they took no account of the associated finance risk on any sale. By admitting this, it allows the group to run the book for cash, and keep aircraft in the air at reduced rates, without damaging the profit and loss account.

The group's new policy of recognising the finance risk in any aircraft sale may reduce profits in the short term, but it is a small price to pay to prevent any unpleasant surprises emerging in future years, when leases are prematurely terminated.

Just as reassuring is BAe's commitment to reveal its off-balance sheet finance and the

associated liabilities in the notes to its accounts. Until now, BAe's risk exposure to its £1.7 billion sales finance has been a worrying mystery. The new information will show just how much risk-weighted debt the group's capital is supporting. Since the Airbus consortium should soon require heavy sales finance, that data is vital to any appreciation of the group.

As BAe comes out of its financial closet in this way, the City will increasingly appreciate its potential profitability. This gives the shares plenty of potential despite this week's impressive gains.

## Abbey National

THE behaviour of Abbey National is becoming more puzzling as each month passes. Last year, it admitted to dabbling in the arcane world of derivatives with Barings, much to the consternation of investors who view

the savings bank as dull but reliable. Now it is buying a bombed-out mortgage book from CIBC.

These manoeuvres are not as erratic as they look. Although CIBC's £900 million mortgage book does not look attractive from any objective standpoint, it has several advantages. CIBC has been trying to sell for two-and-a-half years, and the price has fallen steadily. The 15 per cent discount does not sound much, but the mortgage arrears are ringed with insurance cover, and the premium rate it charges is attractive, given Abbey's access to cheap finance.

The acquisition, renamed Abbey National Mortgage Finance, also gives Abbey a platform to operate as a centralised lender. Centralised lenders do not have a good reputation, after TSB's disastrous episode with Mortgage Express. But if Abbey uses rigorous credit scoring, there is no reason why it should not lend through independent intermediaries.

ANMF can also be used as a vehicle to securitise mortgages since 26 per cent of its mortgages are already securitised. This will provide raw material for Abbey's joint venture with Barings.

Abbey needs to exploit such outlets as these to use its excess capital. With a core risk/asset ratio of 9 per cent, the bank could theoretically double its £80 billion asset book without feeling squeezed. Shareholders should not feel too concerned if their familiar bank has unfamiliar habits.









## IN THE MONEY 24

Valuation  
that really  
paid offWEEKEND  
MONEY

## PENSION PAYOFF 26

Leaving the  
NHS scheme  
proved fruitful

Stores are widening their scope with financial services on offer among their usual wares

Pensions over  
the counter

Next year, Marks and Spencer customers in six big branches will be able to round off their shopping by making an appointment with the store's in-house financial adviser to buy a life assurance policy or a pension (Sara McConnell writes).

If the response is positive, more stores will sell life policies and pensions on top of the unit trusts, personal equity plans and personal loans already offered.

Widely given public mistrust of insurance salespeople, M & S's financial advisers will not be paid commission or any other incentive to sell policies. Customers will make an appointment to see an adviser, who will be in a separate office within the store and able to sell only M & S policies.

Important elements of the scheme, such as who is actually going to run the funds investing policyholders' money, and what level of charges the policies will carry, have not yet been worked out. It could be that M & S will use BZW Investment Management, Baillie Gifford, Robert Fleming, Phillips and Drew Investment Management and GO Woolley, who between them manage M & S's unit trusts and Peps and are thus

tried and tested. So far this combination has produced fund performance which almost exactly matches the average in their sector.

But Marks & Spencer's high street rivals appear to be in no hurry to follow the lead and develop their own financial services companies. They are more interested in renting out floor space to other concerns to satisfy what they believe is a desire for one-stop shopping, or in some experimental cases operating other kinds of outlet on a franchise basis. In some cases, these include post offices, estate agencies and stockbrokers.

Harrods has its own bank, but this is totally separate from the store, with its own customer base. Its customers have a Visa cashpoint and debit card, but no credit card.

They can buy life assurance, pensions and unit trusts as the bank has been an agent of Standard Life since last June. But Alex Wishart, the bank's general manager, said customers in the store who are not bank customers would not normally be sold life assurance.

Debenhams, owned by Burton, made a fleeting attempt at

in-house stockbroking with Debenhams Financial Services. But it sold out to Midland Stockbrokers in September 1990.

Midland now runs what is its only in-store stockbroking branch in Debenhams's Oxford Street branch. Investors can buy and sell holdings of less than £100 for a flat £5 fee.

Tesco, which is "not interested" in offering life and pensions policies, says: "We are interested in adding things which are a good fit with the grocery trip, like chemists where people can get prescriptions, dry cleaners and shoe menders. It has to fit in with what's on people's minds when they are shopping."

The store is experimenting with running two post offices in stores at Finsbury, Essex and Brent Park, north London, on a franchise basis. Customers can buy National Savings certificates and write cheques and pay bills through the Girobank system. It says: "We are doing reasonable business." Asda also believes in offering floor space to organisations which directly fit with customers coming to do their weekly shop. Among the opticians, pharmacists and travel agents operating in Asda stores are seven estate agency outlets. Confusingly, though they are called Asda Property Services, they are nothing to do with Asda.

Almost any type of outlet could in theory operate, although the store said it would probably draw the line at one offering people the chance to order their own funeral in advance, unless there was a lot of customer demand.

STORECARDS were big money-spinners for retailers in the 1980s. Since then, fear of debt and a general belt-tightening by customers mean that many chains have seen a sizeable fall in the number of card holders (Liz Dolan writes).

Increased awareness that users are likely to be charged higher interest on store cards than on other credit cards may have been another deterrent. The Retail Credit Group, which speaks for four in every five storecard groups, reports the number of cards issued by members had dwindled from more than 10 million in the first quarter of 1991 to 8.6 million in September 1993.

Elizabeth Stanton, director, says that although sales on store cards grew 22 per cent in the year to last October, the amount owed on each card fell by an average of 12.5 per cent. "Customers are using credit sensibly; they are not taking on more debt," she said.

Interest rates remain high in many instances. The annual percentage rate (APR) charged on Burton Group's budget card is still 32.10 per cent, little changed from the 35.28 per cent in April 1992, when the bank rate was more

than double that of today. Dixons and Currys charge between 27.8 per cent and 32.4 per cent, depending on payment method, compared with 32.9 per cent two years ago.

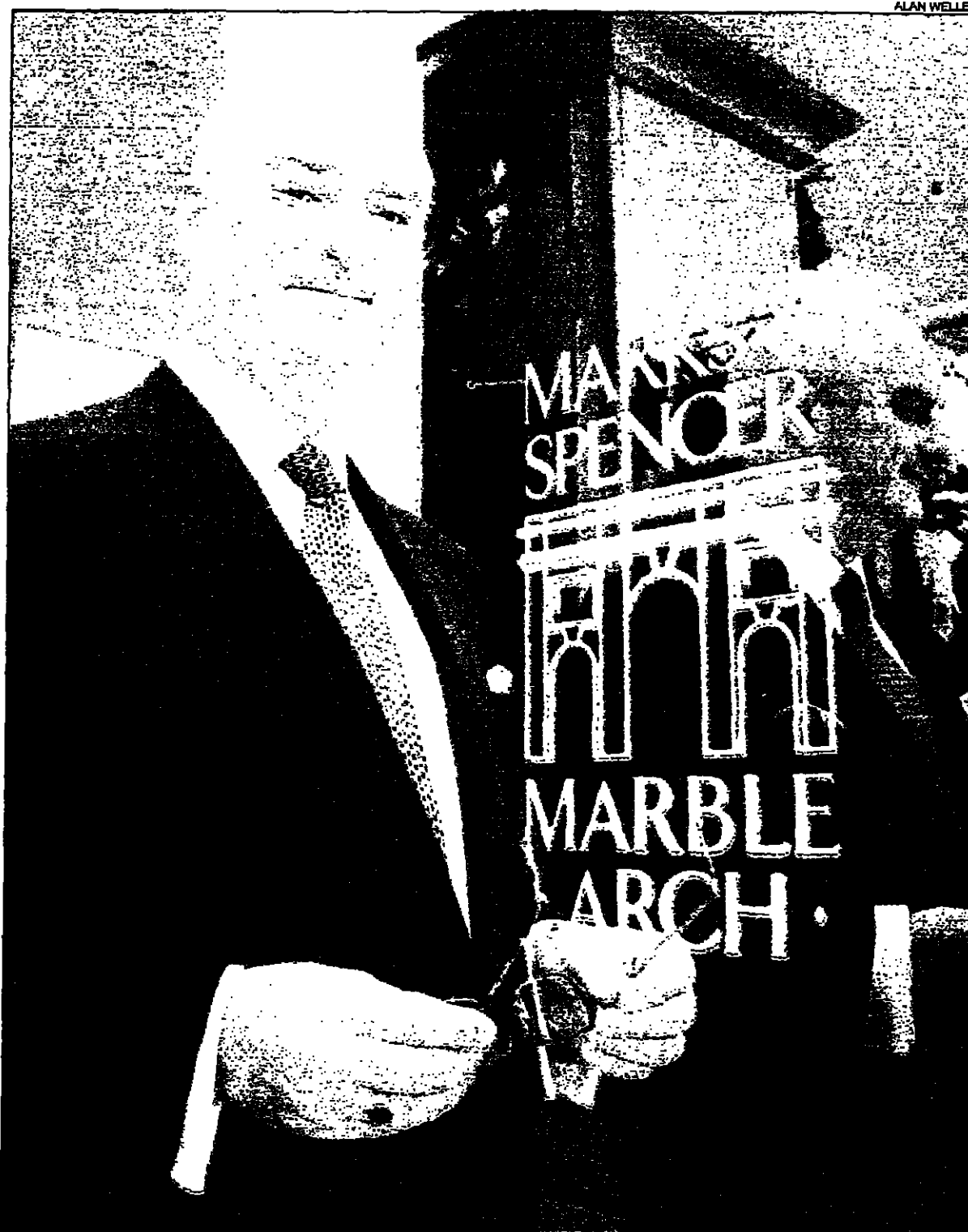
Marks and Spencer's rate has fallen from 26.8-29.8 per cent to 22.4-25.3 per cent. Kingfisher, owner of B&Q, Comet and Woolworth, has sharply reduced its APR from 32.9-38.5 per cent to 22.4-24.9 per cent over the same period. John Lewis, not a member of the RCG, remains the most consistently competitive player, charging just 19.5 per cent APR on its Option card, against 23.8 per cent in April 1992. "We do not look on the card as an end in itself, only as an additional service to our customers supporting our principal business of retailing merchandise," it said.

The RCG reports a slight rise in credit balances. This may be because, when savings rates are low, customers lose almost nothing by using their cards as savings vehicles for "clothes money". Only Marks and Spencer pays interest on credit balances. The others cannot as they are not authorised by the Bank of England to offer financial services.

IN THE crowded financial services market place, the value of a trusted name cannot be underestimated. Marks and Spencer's unit trusts never promised spectacular performance, but traded on the company's reputation for reliability and value for money (Rose Wild writes).

Its expansion into pensions and life assurance comes at a time when the industry as a whole has started to look a little tarnished. It is possible, therefore, customers may be more influenced by their confidence in the brand name, than by the potential drawbacks of the company's inexperience in the field.

Others are already exploiting the brand name factor. The Nationwide Building Society this week launched a television advertising campaign featuring real members



Sir Richard Greenbury, Marks and Spencer chairman: the store's financial advice will be kept separate

## WARRANTIES

EXCESSIVE profits earned by retailers from breakdown insurance on electrical products have recently been brought to the attention of the Office of Fair Trading (Liz Dolan writes).

The Consumers' Association has long considered retailers' extended warranties a waste of money as, even when repairs have to be carried out, the costs are often lower than the insurance premium. A report in *Which?*, the Consumers Association magazine, last year describes them as "usually an expensive way to gain peace of mind".

However, sales talk at time of purchase can be seductive. In addition customers are often told of manufacturers' own warranty schemes, which are normally cheaper than those marketed by retailers themselves.

John Lewis is an honourable exception. It claims that its charges are lower than, or on a par with, those of manufacturers.

In any event, the group automatically guarantees televisions for five years and videos, camcorders and large electrical goods, including washing machines, dishwashers and microwaves for two years. Cover is for parts and labour. Those wishing to extend the period to, say, the first five years on a washing machine, would pay £102.50.

Dixons, the country's largest electricals retailer, says that "less than 50 per cent of purchasers choose to take out warranties".

The group, which also owns Currys, charges a hefty £162 for a four-year warranty on a £400 washing machine, or £95 for a £200 21" colour television. People who do not take out warranties at time of purchase are contacted later to see if they have changed their minds.

Like other large electrical retailers, Dixons relies on the money it makes from warranties for a large part of its profits.

Weekend Money  
is edited by  
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## Check the pension salesmen

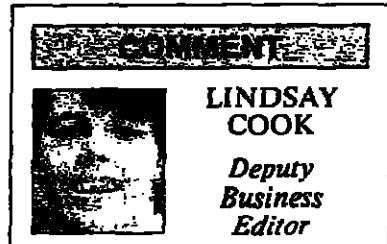
Whenever two or three pension professionals gather together, the conversation soon turns to pension transfers and who can be blamed for the current fiasco, which leaves 500,000 people worried that they will have an impoverished old age.

At one seminar this week, life companies were pointing the finger at the customers. Well, they were obviously to blame because they did not ask enough questions. And the company pension schemes were also at fault for not checking out the personal pensions their members were planning to move to. At another meeting, the employers' pension schemes were blamed for giving such low transfer values to people wanting to leave their schemes.

Oh well, that's OK then, as long as the life industry is unscathed. Pension providers are currently checking all the transfers from occupational pension schemes to personal pensions since July 1988, under the instructions of SIB. They have to find out how many were mis-sold, after the KPMG report for SIB which indicated that more than 90 per cent of transfers did not comply with rules and might have fallen short of best advice to the customers. The steering committee set up by SIB will soon report on how regulations need to be tightened to prevent any more mis-selling.

In the meantime, from accounts reaching me, many a company is hiding behind the regulatory system, as they check their own transfers. "Technically, we were within the rules," they say as they defend their shaky position.

If a company really believes a transfer

LINDSAY  
COOK  
Deputy  
Business  
Editor

value was too low, then it should not have advised the transfer out of the scheme at such a low value.

The truth is that many of the pension salesmen did not pay heed to transfer values — other than to work what the commission would be for them on the transfer — and if they did, most of them would not be able to assess whether the value was fair. At about the same time as the SIB steering committee makes its recommendations on new rules for selling pension transfers, the Personal Investment Authority will be publishing its prospectus. This ought to mark a change in regulation where the protection of investors begins to come before company profitability.

The new regulator faces a tough job though. It seems respected companies are already talking about ways its regime can be diluted. They object to the pitifully low educational standards required for salesmen by the regulators, on the grounds that they are too rigorous. Some life companies would like to introduce a new type of salesman that does not need to be registered, or for that matter trained, other than in how to

make a quick sale. These would not offer advice, they argue, and therefore should not concern the regulators.

Of course, there is already one category of insurance that does not need regulation. It is called term or temporary insurance. It does not come under the Financial Services Act because it is straightforward life cover with no investment involved. It is cheap and should be the first insurance requirement of most families. However, insurance salesmen tend to steer clear of it as the commission paid on it is very low.

Who's to blame? page 26

## Granny rush

Grannies are reported to be rushing to the high street to draw their savings out of building societies and put the money in the new Granny Bonds from National Savings. We must hope they do not regret at their leisure. The rate being paid by National Savings can be equalled in many a society without such onerous conditions.

Tax exempt special savings accounts would allow 7 per cent or more to be earned without deduction of tax over five years. Others pay the same amount without tying up money for five whole years at a time of historically low interest rates.

Stroud & Swindon, for example, offers slightly more, over three years to 60 year-olds, instead of the official bond's 65. It also allows instant access instead of a 60-day wait. There will be more if societies are to fight the outflow.

Granny's rivals, page 25









...eases the cost

Building societies believe they have alternatives to the Government's new "granny bond", says Liz Dolan

## Societies stalk the silver set

BUILDING SOCIETY ALTERNATIVES						Variable ** Fixed rate	
BUILDING SOCIETY	ACCOUNT	MINIMUM INVESTMENT	MONTHLY INCOME % NET			ACCESS	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
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Bradford & Bingley	Special Asset* Direct Notice	£5,000		3.75	4.88	6 months	
Bristol & West	Premier Option Bond* Premier Option Bond**	£10,000		4.98	4.98	90 days	Postal
Cheltenham & Gloucester	Instant 7*	£5,000		4.38	4.38	6 months	Can switch between the two accounts
Coventry	Extra Interest*	£1,000		4.17	4.31	Instant 7 days	Postal, min. transaction £250
Halifax	Guaranteed Reserve** 5 Year Bond**	£2,000 of £10,000		3.34 - 4.46	3.71 - 4.50	Instant 10 days	Rates guaranteed to end Feb 8m, 1yr, 2yr, 3yr, 4yr and 5yr bonds
Leeds	Tessa Gold*	£25	6.65	6.65	6.65	N/A	1.5% bonus yr 1 on £3,000 tax free
N&P	Investment Reserve*	£5,000		3.13	3.67	90 days	1.5% bonus p/a if no withdrawals
Nationwide	Monthly Income* Bonus 50*	£1,000		2.85	3.30	90 days	0.5% p/a bonus if no withdrawals
Newcastle	Novus Select*	£10,000		5.40	5.40	Instant 50 days	2nd yr bond, rate guaranteed to exceed 4.50%
Northam Rock	Monthly Account*	£5,000		4.46	4.61	Instant 50 days	0.5% bonus p/a non-withdrawals
Stroud & Swindon	Pensioner Bond**	£500		5.13	5.13	90 days	3yr bond for over 60s
Woolwich	2 Year Bond**	£5,000		4.73	4.73	Instant 60 days	

NATIONAL Savings has had more than 60,000 enquiries about its new Pensioners' Guaranteed Income Bonds, launched two weeks ago and 12,000 over-65s have been impressed enough to invest. But there will be no news of how much cash the new bonds have attracted until February 12.

Building societies are waiting for the

full picture. None admits to a big outflow into the new granny bonds and only one has so far picked up the Government's gauntlet. Bradford & Bingley said it is "keeping a watching brief". Northern Rock denied being "overly nervous"; the Halifax remained calm.

But all societies are keeping an

extremely close eye on vulnerable accounts. The lone combatant is Stroud & Swindon, which this week launched its Pensioners Bond in competition to the NS bond.

The NS bond pays 7 per cent gross, taxable at normal rates, is limited to over-65s, demands 60 days' notice of withdrawal while deducting 60 days'

interest and lasts five years. The NS bond is most likely to find favour with small savers. When asked to name a product competing directly with National Savings' new baby few societies could do so, as the table shows. While rates on larger balances are competitive, smaller savers appear to be largely ignored.



Pensioners are looking for top numbers on returns from their savings accounts

### BRIEFINGS

TSB has started to give its personal customers advance notification of all charges on current account. From February 2, customers will be given at least 14 days' notice by their statement detailing the amount charged and the date it will be debited. TSB has pre notified customers of overdraft interest and fees since October 1992. Customers will only be charged amounts in the bank's published tariff. The revised version of the banking industry's Code of Practice, to be published on Tuesday, is expected to require all banks to prenotify customers of charges.

Girobank's Telecare telephone banking service will now operate 24 hours a day, 265 days a year. Customers using the service can check their balance, request an overdraft, order travellers' cheques and foreign currency, move

funds abroad, amend standing orders, pay bills and get cash from Link machines. The service uses human operators rather than computers.

Age Concern Insurance Services, the older people's insurance specialist, is issuing free guides to valuing homes and contents for insurance purposes after finding that up to a quarter of older people do not have enough cover. The free guides are available from Age Concern Insurance Services, Department CC1, Garrod House, Chaldon Road, Caterham CR3 5YZ.

A low-cost "bed and breakfast" telephone share dealing service is being offered by the Skipton building society. "Bed and breakfasting" shares means selling them and buying them back the next day to establish a gain or loss for capital gains tax purposes. The society charges a minimum of £25 with a 1 per cent commission on sales of up to £5,000 and 0.2 per cent commission on sales of over £5,000.

First Direct, the telephone banking arm of Midland Bank, has launched a personal equity plan which will track the performance of the UK's top 100 companies. It will be managed by James Capel Fund Managers and will be available to First Direct cheque account customers. Those who invest a lump sum of more than £3,000 between February 4 and April 30 will be charged a 2 per cent initial charge instead of 5.25 per cent. Less than £3,000 in a lump sum between these dates will be charged 3 per cent.

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**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Objective and current policy: To achieve long-term capital growth from investment primarily in the securities of companies quoted on trading exchanges, where there is an emerging market, or in closed-ended vehicles which invest primarily in such securities. The Fund also may purchase fixed-interest securities. Currently the regulations governing unit investment vehicles in the UK require that the securities of companies not listed on a stock exchange must be held in a closed-ended vehicle. The difference between these two prices is expected to be 0.05%, although Save & Prosper may vary these prices and the difference between them within the limits of a formula laid down by regulations made under the Financial Services Act 1986. In the case of a transaction in excess of £15,000 the Manager reserves the right to quote a special historic or special forward price within the limits of that formula or deal on the next quoted price calculated.

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**Conversions:** An independent financial adviser who recommends this unit trust to you is entitled to receive commission from Save & Prosper Group Limited at the rate of 3% of the purchase price of the units.

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**BRISTOL**  **& WEST** **& YOU**

The blame for the emerging pension transfer scandal, in which up to 500,000 people could have been wrongly advised to transfer from occupational schemes to personal pensions, must be shared by regulators, the Government and life company managers and not simply pinned on one or two "rogue" salesmen, a seminar of consumer groups and trade unionists agreed this week.

At the end of last year, report published by the Securities and Investments Board, the chief City regulator, showed that nine out of ten people persuaded to transfer into a personal pension from an occupational scheme were wrongly advised.

Nurses, teachers, miners and other public sector workers, whose occupational pensions offered some of the best benefits, were, in many cases, targeted by salesmen. Insurance companies now face a potential bill for compensation of more than £1 billion.

The SIB was attacked at the seminar, held at the Consumers' Association, for failing to protect investors by acting fast enough. There were calls for reform of the system of self-regulation to include more consumer input.

The present system of investor protection is fundamentally flawed because it is run by the same people who fail to protect investors in the first place, the seminar heard.

However, the Government

Life companies using the government-given opportunity to sell more policies in turn allowed under-trained and "incompetent" sales staff motivated mainly by commission to sell complex policies to people who in many cases did not need them, the seminar was told.

SARA McCONNELL



**Ex-nurse Dee Nivison, who opted out of the NHS pension scheme and made money**

**T**he number of people seeking advice about pensions has increased in the wake of recent adverse publicity about commission-hungry sales staff.

Graham Steele of Individual Savings and Insurance Services (Iis), the pensions adviser, which represents 280 independent financial advisers (IFAs), reports that business has "dropped horrifically" over the past two months.

He calculates that, although the number of sales advisers has probably stayed put, up to 10 per cent of the £600 billion currently managed by company schemes ought to be transferred to personal

gave encouragement to the private sector. The offices played up the ball and ran with it, but failed to train staff adequately. The regulatory body allowed the situation to go on for too long, then panicked. The bad press since then has been fairly spectacular," said Mr Steele.

When Isis set up a free helpline three weeks ago for people worried about their pension plans, 500 rang up on the first day. That number has risen to 1,000. About 10 per cent of callers had been advised to opt out of company schemes while still employed by the company, thus losing the employers' contributions.

But on closer inspection, she may have made the right decision. This is because there has been a rush to find a job since moving to Lancaster a few years ago. She decided to transfer into a personal pension plan, Guardian Royal Exchange Choices Series 2,

supper after Christmas. Mr Burke suspects that three quarters of them were wrongly advised to opt out of the generous NHS scheme, but has yet to complete his investigations.

Dee Nivison, who transferred 28 years' worth of NHS pension benefits into a personal pension scheme in October 1992, was at first thought to be one of the unlucky ones.

But on closer inspection, she may have made the right decision. This is because there has been a rush to find a job since moving to Lancaster a few years ago. She decided to transfer into a personal pension plan, Guardian Royal Exchange Choices Series 2,

chemes. People who may otherwise transfer are missing out through fear of being wrongly advised, he says.

While accepting that a number of people may have been misled over the past few years, Mr Steele questions whether the true figure is anywhere near the 500,000 commonly mentioned. He maintains that life companies were more culpable than their individual sales staff. Tied and direct sales forces who only receive six weeks' training cannot possibly understand the complexity of even a company's own policy, he says. They offered simple advice but did not know what benefits clients will lose by transferring into personal pension plans.

"As I see it, the Government

**M**artin Burke, of the Royal College of Nursing's membership services arm, says it is "inconceivable" that sales staff were experts on individual company schemes, but maintains this is no excuse for bad advice. Members of company schemes also suffered from their own ignorance, he says. Six in every 100 callers to an RCN pensions helpline mentioned that the NHS scheme had never been explained to them. That was unprompted. Had he asked, we would probably have found that most of the rest were in the same position." More than 500 anxious nurses have called the RCN helpline since it was set

after talking to an adviser at her local Nationwide branch.

The plan's main attraction was that it allowed her to retire at 55, whereas the NHS scheme would not pay out before her 60th birthday.

She said she was depressed that she could not get a job and felt the need for security. According to Nationwide, the £66,800 transferred by Miss Nivison in September 1992 has already grown to £96,000, net of commission.

Because Miss Nivison is now unlikely to get another NHS job, she may be one of the few nurses actually to benefit from having opted for a private pension.

**LIZ DOLAN**

SALES & PROMOTION

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# Norwich expect backlash after sale of Fox

By Keith Pike

SUPPORTER power, which has been partly responsible for the departures of two FA Cup-winning managers and one chairman this season, is expected to make its voice heard again this afternoon. If the visit of Liverpool to the club is not enough to guarantee a lively atmosphere at Carrow Road, "Disgraced of Norwich City" surely will.

Official supporters' club representatives said yesterday that no orchestrated demonstrations had been planned but Norwich are still expecting to hear a vocal backlash to their midweek decision to sell Ruel Fox to

Newcastle United for £2.25 million. "It could be a bit detrimental to the team," John Deehan, the Norwich manager, said. "I hope they direct their anger towards me."

More likely, followers will concentrate their efforts in the direction of Robert Chase, the Norwich chairman, who has again been forced to deny a perceived lack of ambition at his club, generated over eight seasons when their best players have been sold on and reinforced by Mike Walker's resignation as manager to move to Everton last month.

Deehan's plans to reinvest some of the Fox fortune have so far come to nothing, although he is "hoping to

get some wheels in motion by Monday". Neil Adams, of Oldham Athletic, is a known target. Just as pressing is the need to improve on a woeful home record — one win in ten matches since October 6 — and for Deehan to secure his first victory as manager since officially succeeding Walker, Ekoku, rather than the teenager, Eddie, is Fox's most likely replacement this afternoon.

After 30 years on the staff, Roy Evans fulfils his ambition of managing Liverpool for the first time. The club has gone back to "boot room" basics with his appointment but the problems that dogged Graeme Souness during his troubled reign,

which ended with the FA Cup defeat by Bristol City, persist. Form is fitful, Ruddock and Harkness are suspended and Wright, Dicks and Redknapp injured and doubtful.

Norwich versus Liverpool is one of eight Premiership matches on a day that had been initially left free of leading fixtures in the hope that England would be in need of a World Cup warm-up match. The rearranged games give Manchester United the chance to extend their club record unbeaten run to 30 games and for Mark Stein, the Chelsea striker, to set a Premiership goalscoring record. United, to the delight of Alex Ferguson, their manager, will not be

live on television — their FA Cup meeting with Wimbledon on February 20 will be their eighth such appearance in seven weeks — when they take on Queens Park Rangers at Loftus Road with an unchanged team. Terry Venables, the new England coach, is expected among the crowd but he might not get the chance to assess Les Ferdinand, the Rangers striker, who has recovered from a thigh injury but is not assured of a return to the team.

Stein has scored in Chelsea's last six Premiership games and will beat the record set by Mick Quinn, of Coventry City, last season if he finds the target against Everton today.

## Wise man with special legacy

Rob Hughes looks back at the unique understanding and managerial career of Tony Waddington

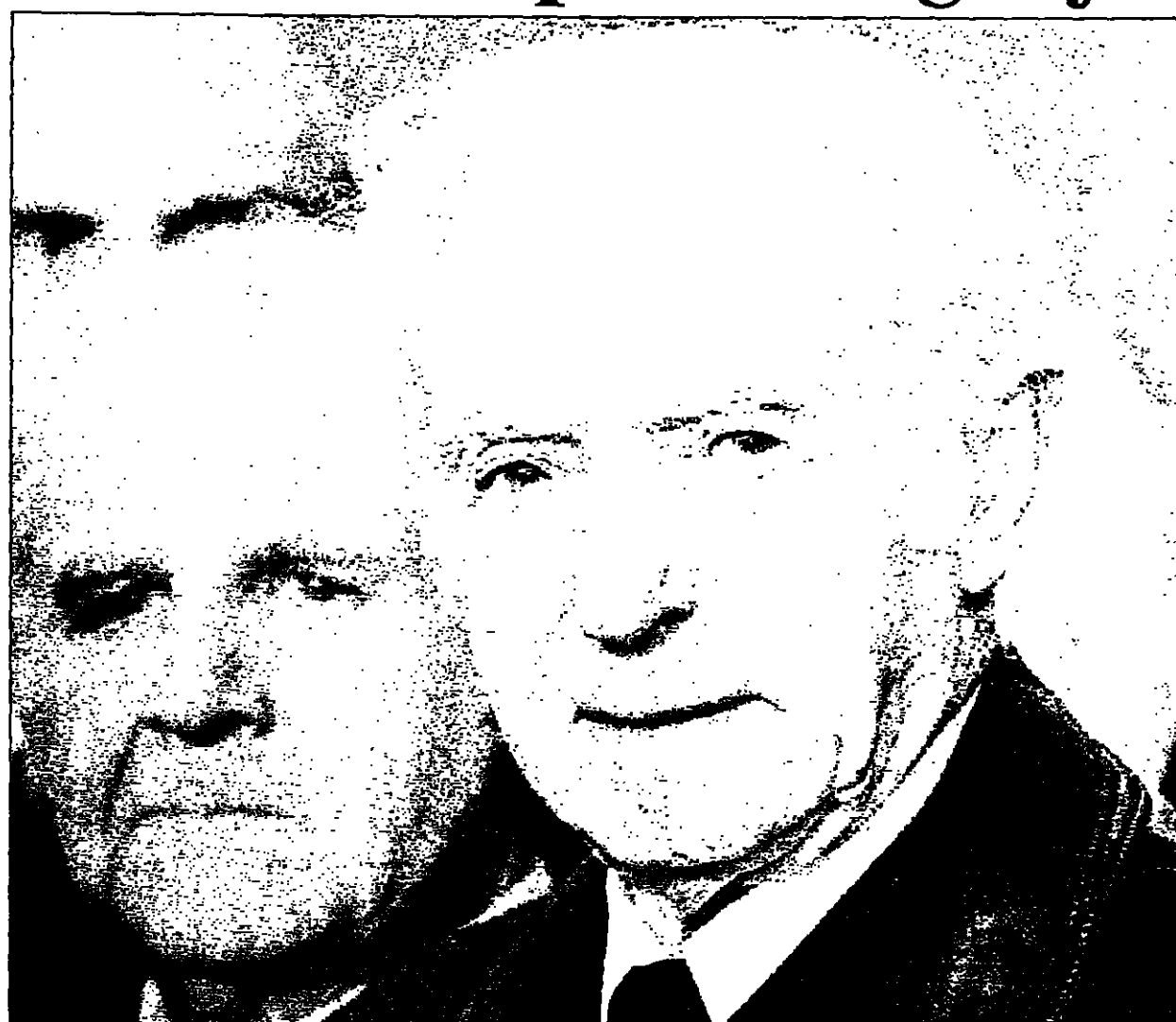
FOOTBALL is losing good men at an unnerving rate. Danny Blanchflower, Matt Busby... and yesterday the game laid to rest Tony Waddington. You need not to have been among the thousands who lined the streets around the Victoria Ground in Stoke yesterday lunchtime or among the hundreds inside and outside the church in Crewe later on to have shared an appreciation that Waddington was the equal of Blanchflower and Busby as a football man.

He was, in essence, parochial. He lived the greater part of half a century in the Potteries and he was renowned as a collector of inside forwards, almost as if they were his personal items of fine porcelain. Yet the essence of parochialism and the insistence, through pragmatic times, that his teams would play something close to pure football are the legacies of one of the most genuine, and brave, men I have met in the game.

Waddington will be known — and wished to be known — through the greatness of players he sought to blend into the red and white striped colours of Stoke City. Sir Stanley Matthews, of course. Matthews, silver-white now, was present at the funeral. So too were the nucleus of the 1972 Waddington team that won the only big honour acquired by Stoke City, the League Cup. Six of that team carried the coffin into St Mary's Roman Catholic church, Crewe. It was possible to recall them shouldering their manager, their father figure, they insisted yesterday, in triumph those 22 years ago. The pallbearers were Gordon Banks, Terry Conroy, Peter Dobing, Jimmy Greenhoff, Jackie Marsh, Denis Smith and two players who came later than 1972, Alan Dodd and Geoff Salmons.

For all of them, Dodds, Stoke born and bred, articulated the Waddington years: "It was just a joy to play under Tony. Some managers thrive on friction; Stoke City was a family club, the fondest memories of my life."

What was different about this man who passed away at the age of 69? It was that he



Saying goodbye, Matthews, one of Stoke's favourite players, at Waddington's funeral yesterday

utterly lacked pretension. His concept was that players are the game — and that special players make the game special. He was a collector of old, proven talents. He refused that, arguing that he bought thoroughbreds.

However, when you are remembered as the manager who brought back Matthews to Stoke, the inference is clear. Waddington lamented the way other people gave up too soon on genuine class.

His own weakness might have been that, rather than take Manchester United or Leeds United when the offers to manage them came, he stayed in the Potteries. Part of the reason was that, though born in Manchester, he had a heightened awareness of what football is to a community. That and a family situation of his own — there were four generations down to his great-grandchildren at the church yesterday — were blessed with

an old-fashioned notion relying on roots. He built teams over a 17-year period for Stoke and, for a shorter time, for Crewe Alexandra, in the belief that they were important to societies.

He also worked on the inside with, rather than in charge of, players. I remember a training field in Essex before the League Cup semi-final in



Waddington: enthusiast

1972, when Stoke were engaged in a four-match marathon against West Ham United. The lack of tension, the essence of cooperation was more than evident and the tactics were worked out in a matter of minutes, on the centre circle of the training field, as Waddington listened to his captain, Dobing, his England goalkeeper, Banks, and to one of his favourite playmakers, George Eastham. They spoke, he nodded and far too many people in modern football will suggest that there is something wrong in a manager allowing senior professionals to have the major input on strategy.

In that, Waddington was a footballing relation to Helmut Schön, who won the 1974 World Cup while accused of letting Franz Beckenbauer run the team.

I don't tell thoroughbreds how to play," Waddington said, emphasising again the word "thoroughbreds". "I ac-

quire players. I let them play. It is the unexpected that excites people and players, not coaches, provide that."

Though he died this week, his enthusiasm will outlast him. He loved nothing better than to run his eye over a player, to back his judgment and, once decisions were taken, not only to trust them, but to go on offering them the platform long after others in the game sneered at his parade of golden oldies.

"I would observe Stan [Matthews], he said of the most famous of those. "When the ball came to him, it wasn't a matter of controlling it — it could hit him, it could be a lousy pass — but the minute it touched anywhere on his body, it was dead. It comes from this thing called balance and, whether you looked for it or not, it was there. I'm always being told that I'm always being told that it is the thing that makes exceptional players."

## Atherton hope to build on success

Non-League Football by Walter Gammie

ATHERTON Laburnum Rovers had a fair season last year. They won the Bass North-West Counties League by 23 points, garnering 109 from 42 matches. They lost only their second and their last games, going 39 matches unbeaten, including a run of 15 consecutive victories, and keeping 28 clean sheets.

At the finish of the campaign, the club, unhappily transferred five years ago by boundary changes from Greater Manchester to the borough of Wigan, was slapped down. The Northern Premier League rejected its application because its Crilly Park ground was not up to scratch and gave the first-division place to Bamber Bridge, who finished second.

So, Atherton rolled up their sleeves and set out to do it all over again. After their match against Skelmersdale United on Wednesday night, which they won 1-0, they stood nine points clear of Rossendale United at the top of the table. They have also enjoyed their best run in the FA Vase and meet Bridgnorth Town today for a place in the last eight.

Dave Morris, the manager, and Peter Lee, his assistant, have been at the club for four years, but Atherton's fortunes took off with the arrival of Gerry Luska as coach before the start of last season. They also found a solid central defender in Andy Feeley, who played more than 300 matches for Bury, through chats over the garden fence with his neighbour, Lee.

Dave Liptrót has joined Shaun Parker this season in a free-scoring forward combination that delights the supporters, whose hard core numbers 180. Brian Seddon, the secretary, said: "That was what we got against Flinton last Saturday. Bolton were at home and Flinton are bottom of the table. Everything was against us. On Saturday, we expect 1,000 or more."

Also eagerly anticipated this weekend are the findings from 100ft bore holes, drilled at a cost of £2,700 and necessary because of mining subsidence, which will determine whether the club can erect the 200-seat stand that it needs to satisfy the Northern Premier League.

## McManus close to final breakthrough

ALAN McManus, of Scotland, will have another opportunity to rid himself of an unwanted reputation as perennial nearly man when he plays in the final of the £150,000 Regal Welsh Open snooker tournament in Newport today (Phil Yates writes).

McManus, 23, who has lost in the final of five leading events and the semi-finals of 11 others, gave himself a further chance of capturing that elusive first title by beating Peter Ebdon 6-2 yesterday. He capitalised on the majority of his openings, with breaks of 95, 121 and 65, and now believes he is better equipped, technically and emotionally, to win a ranking tournament.

"It's easy to say that you feel more confident than ever going into a final but I honestly do," McManus, who will meet Steve Davis or James Wattana for the £27,000 first prize, said.

## Lendl bows to injury

TENNIS: Ivan Lendl was forced to pull out of his quarter-final with Magnus Gustafsson in the Dubai Open yesterday with a back injury. Lendl had outplayed Gustafsson to take the first set 6-4 and seemed to be cruising to an easy victory when he called for the Association of Tennis Professionals' trainer, Alex Stober, at 1-1 in the second set. Although he played on after that, he had to withdraw in the third set. He intended to seek treatment in the United States.

Steffi Graf and Martina Navratilova coasted through straight-set wins yesterday to advance into the semi-finals of the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo. Fresh from her Australian Open triumph, Graf overcame Jana Nedjedy, of Canada, 6-1, 6-1. Navratilova, the holder and No 2 seed, beat Larisa Neiland, of Latvia, 6-4, 6-4.

## Windows clears hurdle

RACKETS: Matthew Windows beat the Tonbridge professional, David Makey, in four games in the first round of the Lacoste British Open championship at Queen's Club. Windows started strongly, finding an excellent length on his serve, to take the opening two games and though Makey then took the initiative to win the next game, Windows emerged from a tight fourth game to serve through for the match. The Queen's Club professional, David Johnson, overpowered the flu-ridden Robert Trible.

## Hounslow's mission

HOCKEY: Hounslow seek revenge for their 3-2 league defeat in December when they visit East Grinstead today for a postponed Hockey Association Cup fifth-round tie. Nick Conway leads Bourneville's attack in another tie, against Old Loughborough at Chigwell. Injuries have forced Bourneville to call up the reserve goalkeeper, Peter Bryant. In the remaining fifth-round match, Havant travel to Bromley, who entertain Hounslow, joint leaders of the Pizza Express national league, in a league game tomorrow.

## Boardman prepares

CYCLING: Chris Boardman was yesterday preparing for his debut as a professional road cyclist on Tuesday in the six-day Tour of the Mediterranean. "I have a degree of fitness which I wouldn't normally try to achieve in February," Boardman said, fitness he will need as part of the French team led by Greg LeMond, of the United States. Plans for Boardman to compete in the Paris-Nice classic next month have been put on hold largely because the number of time-trials — his speciality — in the event has been reduced.

## Jones leaves Giants

BASKETBALL: Mystery surrounded the departure of Jeff Jones yesterday after nearly six years as coach of Manchester Giants, the Budweiser League leaders. "I cannot give any inference as to why I have left, but I will do so shortly," he said. Jones, 39, had almost four years remaining of his contract. Giants were facing games at Hemel Hempstead Royals tonight and at home to Worthing tomorrow without the suspended Trevor Gordon and Joe Hillman, who has returned to the United States.

## Lomas shrugs off illness

TABLE TENNIS: Lisa Lomas almost pulled out of the European Top 12 tournament yesterday before calling the doctor, embarking on a course of antibiotics and losing her opening match 2-19, 21-15, 21-18 to Otília Badescu in Arrezzo, Italy. The England No 1, who fell sick and came home early from the Commonwealth championships in Hyderabad last week, fell ill again with a high temperature in the middle of Thursday night. Only medication and a last-minute knock-out emboldened her to play.

## GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL									
Kick-off 3.0 unless stated									
* all-times match									
FA Cup First Round									
Exeter City v Walsley									
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**ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE MARTIN**

مكتبة ابن الجوزي



## Ireland and Wales retain cautious and non-committal approach

# Rivals offer only food for thought

FROM GERALD DAVIES IN DUBLIN

IN THEIR estimation of the encounter in Dublin this afternoon, neither Ireland nor Wales will commit themselves to a view other than to say it is going to be "very interesting". They are as non-committal and wary as that. This is like being confronted by a highly hostile advertising "interesting food".

What should we expect? How does one assess the position? Should it create an opportunity for enterprise, to chance your arm and stop, or does it merely establish a doubt?

After all, how "interesting" is "interesting"? It says something and yet nothing. Where is the conviction? What exactly is on offer? How should we be persuaded one way or another? Of the teams today, which has the stronger will, which the weaker?

Such is the caution that although they emerged with different results from their opening matches in the championship — Wales having won a substantial victory against Scotland in Cardiff while Ireland suffered a reversal of similar proportions in Paris — neither is prepared to draw any firm conclusions of future prospects from either outcome.

Wales know from their solemn experience of last season that the trumpeting celebrations of an early victory can only too soon return to the muffled drum of a series of defeats. Ireland understand, like the other home countries

apart from England, that if Parc des Princes is proving an unscalable fortress, once back on their own, comfortable patch it is only the foolish or the inexperienced who would be so presumptuous as to expect the slide to continue at Lansdowne Road.

They are able to stiffen the sinews when the motivation is strongest. Ask England. But until they start stringing a few victories together, the Celtic fringe exists in a kind of limbo of uncertainty. The home

### FIVE NATIONS



### CHAMPIONSHIP

draw sometimes helps in these matters. But if this might merely hint at the changing fortunes that a home advantage brings and the trap that is set for the Welsh, let us tarry a moment longer before rushing headlong to the bookmakers.

Ponder this: further communion. Of the last five visits Wales have made to Dublin since 1984, they have won on four occasions. With Ireland not having lost in Cardiff since 1981, mutual fraternal charity

may be said to be taken a mile too far. It is too full of the milk of human kindness. In retrospect, at any rate.

For 80 minutes, there will be no such generosity as each team tries to establish a new reputation.

Where does all this leave the forecasters? Only the weather men seem to be confident. The promise from them is for more wind and rain, of which there has been a great deal already. The conditions may prove as treacherous as they were in Cardiff three weeks ago, which might well make Wales feel at home.

This time, however, they are to face a more resilient and hardened front row, where Clohesy and Poplewell are rock steady.

It is unlikely to persuade Wales to ignore penalty opportunities at goal and opt instead for another scrummage, as they felt confident in doing against Scotland.

Francis, at lock, will pose further questions of Wales's persistent inconsistency to provide sustained possession in the lineout and which Weir, the Scottish replacement, exposed in their last match.

But Ireland may have their doubts, too. If McCall, in the centre, and McBride, at lock, are the changes from the France game, the swapping of positions in the back five represents a further unknown factor.

Galwey shifts from the back to the second row instead of Johns, who back-pedals to No 8, from where Robinson moves sideways to the flank. Who can tell what effect this may have? It is, as they say, interesting.

Wales are happy with the same team apart from the return of Proctor on the left wing, who replaces Walker. He is taking his obligatory time out as a result of concussion three weeks ago.

With Ireland unlikely to prove as accommodating as Scotland, Wales will need to repeat the performance from their opening game, with something more in addition, if they are to contemplate continuing their recent Dublin trend.

The kicking boots of Elwood and Jenkins, who accumulated 15 and 14 points respectively last time around, will surely hold the key.



Ieuan Evans, the Wales captain, in buoyant mood during training yesterday

## New order in same class as old guard



Rob Andrew on the task he and his England colleagues face at Murrayfield this afternoon

Perhaps the most startling statistic concerning the England side that meets Scotland for the Calcutta Cup at Murrayfield today is that there are only four survivors from the team that played in the 1990 grand slam decider in Edinburgh.

England have not chopped and changed teams in recent years, yet we go to Murrayfield with only Will Carling, Rory Underwood, Brian Moore, and myself from the 1990 side which lost to the Scots. This demonstrates that there is fierce competition for places.

Nowhere is the competition greater than at scrum half. To be able to have Dewi Morris, the British Isles scrum half from last summer, as a replacement because there is someone else playing so well is an indication of England's ability. Morris and Kyran Bracken are quite different players, with different attributes. They have styles of their own, but both are terrific players.

It is a reflection of the English set-up and system, through the Courage Clubs Championship, that players can come in and play one, two or three internationals and become household names because they are world-class players. Martin Johnson, for example, has only two caps and even Ben Clarke has only six.

It is exciting that there is this sort of quality around. England teams in other sports struggle to be successful, particularly in transitional periods, but the rugby side seems able to take the loss of leading players in its stride.

Neil Back is the latest newcomer to break into the side and much has already been said about him. He is a phenomenal player in terms of ball skills, speed and strength. Providing we can bring him into play, he will be a big asset. Neil will get

many caps for England, I am sure, because he is a quality player.

The England set-up now demands that we have 25 or even 30 players who are high-class international performers. I think we are well on the way to that total because we can add people like Guscott, Richards, Rodber, Redman and Hunter to the 21 at Murrayfield.

And why do we need 25 or 30 such players? Because that is the sort of strength in depth needed to win the World Cup and that is what the majority of us want.

Already I believe this new side has the potential to go even further than the 1991 and 1992 grand slam sides. There is a bit more flexibility up front and overall a greater capacity to switch tactics during a game. We also have the players who can adapt to any style.

For example, today we would prefer the weather to be good so that we can express ourselves. Obviously a player like Back would help that tactic. But if it is windy and pouring with rain we have players like Hall, Clarke, Johnson and Bayfield who can play in a style suited to those conditions. That is why I say this team has more potential than its predecessors.

This is not to say that we are over-confident in any way. We think Scotland have at last got their selection right, because this looks the best side they have chosen for some time. It would not take a miracle for Scotland to win and we are very wary of them.

Anyone who was in the England side at Murrayfield in 1990 would understand why and if any of the new players think we only have to turn up to win, they will get some harsh reminders from the 1990 veterans about what can happen. I don't want to experience that again.

Interview by Peter Bills

**IRELAND**  
C P O'Shea (Lansdowne)  
R M Wallace (Garryowen)  
M C McCall (Garryowen)  
P P A Danaher (Garryowen)  
S P Geoghegan (London Irish)  
E P Elwood (Lansdowne)  
M T Bradley (Cork Const)  
N J Poplewell (Greyhounds)  
T J Kingston (Dolphin)  
P M Clohesy (Young Munster)  
B F Robinson (Ballymena)  
M J Galwey (Shannon)  
N P J Francis (Old Belvedere)  
W D McBride (Malone)  
P S Johns (Dungannon)

**WALES**  
A Clement (Swansea)  
I C Evans (Llanelli)  
M R Hall (Cardiff)  
N G Davies (Llanelli)  
W T Proctor (Llanelli)  
N R Jenkins (Pontypridd)  
R H St J B Moon (Llanelli)  
R L Evans (Llanelli)  
G R Jenkins (Swansea)  
J D Davies (Neath)  
E W Lewis (Llanelli)  
P T Davies (Llanelli)  
G D Llewellyn (Neath)  
M A Parry (Llanelli)  
L S Quinlan (Llanelli)

Replacements: 16 C P O'Shea (Llanelli), 17 A N McGowan (Blackrock College), 18 R Saunders (London Irish), 19 K D O'Connor (Sunday's Well), 20 P McCarthy (Cork Constitution), 21 K G M Wood (Garryowen).

Replacements: 16 M A Fayer (Cardiff), 17 S D Hill (Cardiff), 18 R M Jones (Swansea), 19 R C McBryde (Swansea), 20 H Williams-Jones (Llanelli), 21 A H Copey (Llanelli).

## Armstrong to restore Scots' bite

SCOTLAND'S fate has hung in the balance before. Rather than Robert the Bruce and his spider, though, the country's rugby enthusiasts have called for a little Border terrier in the hope that his restoration will turn the tide that has flowed against them ever since the terrier retired into self-imposed exile last summer.

There is not a lot of Gary Armstrong, but pound for pound he is one of the most combative and talented scrum halves his country has produced.

That there should have been such a seamless transition from Roy Laidlaw to Armstrong in 1988 — both from the same club, both made apparently from the same mould — is one of the minor miracles which Scotland, more than most, need every now and then to sustain their position on the international stage.

"If you were considering the world's best scrum halves at the end of last season, you would have been looking at him," Ian McGeechan, Armstrong's former coach, said.

The player himself would shrug, look slightly awkward and remind anyone who cared to listen that there are 15 players in a team and that he is not Superman.

Nevertheless, the Murrayfield roar when Scotland emerge against England this afternoon will be all the louder for Armstrong's return. Any successful team needs a hard core of players who can hold their own in any company and that core this season, given

A 'Border terrier' is straining at the leash to let fly at England today, David Hands reports

Craig Chalmers's loss of confidence and form, has been reduced to the Hastings brothers — and one of them was picked out of position against New Zealand.

This is not to denigrate the others but Armstrong occupies an elevated plane, even after half a season of dabbling anywhere but scrum half in Jed-Forester's back division. The question in English minds will be whether there has been any shift in focus, any decline of his many powers, since Armstrong withdrew with an ankle injury from last summer's British Isles tour to New Zealand and then renowned international rugby altogether. It is unlikely.

Armstrong is a plain-spoken man who takes no decisions lightly. A lorry driver by trade, he wanted more time with his wife and two small children than rugby permitted him.

So he gave up the international game with its interminable squad sessions and

weekend gatherings away. That he has come back will have had more to do with the struggles of his former colleagues against the All Blacks and Wales than with the special pleading of the present management and the encouragement of a sympathetic employer which has given him time for training.

Eighty points conceded in two matches is hard for a proud nation to take and Armstrong had been part of a side which, in 1990, won a grand slam — against England. "I want to try and help Scotland out of a hole," he said and, though that decision may only last for this season, and will certainly not

embrace summers away on tour, Scotland will be eternally grateful.

So will Gregor Townsend. Now that he has been moved to stand-off half in place of Chalmers, Armstrong's long-term partner, Townsend could not have a better mentor as his partner.



Armstrong: comeback

Armstrong is famous for never putting his stand-off in trouble, for his ability to stand up to opposing back rows and frequently to make fools of them by escaping their embrace and finding gaps that others had not perceived.

At 5ft 8in and under 14st, you would not bet on Armstrong when you consider the size of the forwards who roam rugby fields today.

Yet his strength and speed off the mark have been constant allies and those are the precise areas on which he has worked these last three weeks, with special sprint training devised by Chico Woods, the Jed-Forester fitness adviser and veteran sprint champion.

Having made his decision, Armstrong's condition today will not be in doubt.

"One man doesn't make a team," Armstrong, who won his 28th cap in the defeat by England at Twickenham last March, says, but in this instance the boost that the little bristly-haired campaigner has given his colleagues and his country can hardly be measured. "He's a very chirpy lad, his motivation and desire to do well rub off on the other players," Gavin Hastings, his captain, says.

Armstrong's presence will be a formidable test for England's tyro, Kyran Bracken, but far greater is the challenge which Armstrong has accepted. "I'd be wasting my time if I didn't think we could beat them," he said and, as he has shown, Armstrong does not enjoy wasting his time.

## Report calls for end of 'shamateurism'

BY DAVID HANDS

RUGBY union's drift towards a form of institutionalised professionalism will receive further encouragement if the New Zealand Rugby Football Union (NZRFU) approves next month the findings of independent consultants that urged yesterday an end to "shamateurism" in the game.

The NZRFU commissioned the Boston Consulting Group, which was previously involved with a number of American sports and with Australian Rules, to research the way forward for rugby union, at a time when the game in New Zealand has lost ground to rugby league.

Leading players believe that full or semi-professionalism is inevitable

because of the demands being made by representative rugby. The report recommends payment and a profit-sharing scheme for leading players, as well as a restructuring of New Zealand's provincial competition and shorter, high-profile tours. It specifies four pre-requisites of success: international leadership, strong domestic competition, customer satisfaction and player welfare.

Eddie Tonks, the NZRFU council chairman and chairman of the International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) this year, said: "We are not going to buck IRFB recommendations but we have got to try to change them at that level. We are so close to it [professionalism] at the moment. We either have rules we can all comply with or we cut the rules out."

Adherence to the report's recommen-

dation would change the fundamental plank upon which rugby union is based and would require approval from three-quarters of the IRFB. Dudley Wood, secretary of the Rugby Football Union, said: "Players are intelligent enough to realise the benefits of having a full-time job compared with being under contract to play rugby exclusively."

But Sean Fitzpatrick, the New Zealand captain, said: "It's what the players have been saying all along." Brian Moore, the England hooker, added: "I would not mind being a semi-professional player. It would not involve me in any more time but it's not an issue for me because I have a good job. Players who don't have jobs which offer a bright future or who eke out a meagre living should have their talents rewarded properly."



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## Scotland need little motivation for Calcutta Cup clash

## England enter exciting new era

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

A NEW era begins for England at Murrayfield today. Victory over New Zealand in November was the final objective of 1993 but the building blocks are in place for the team that will carry England forward not only to the World Cup next year but, if reports from New Zealand yesterday bear fruit, towards a new millennium of professional rugby union.

Yet although Geoff Cooke, the England manager, suggested yesterday that seven-eighths of the World Cup

in Edinburgh in defence of the Calcutta Cup. Despite punters inclining towards Scotland in the last two days, England go into the Royal Bank International as overwhelming favourites, as much because of Scottish inadequacy this season as from their merits.

Gavin Hastings, the Scotland captain, said yesterday that England's presence in Edinburgh was the greatest motivational tool at his disposal. Hastings, whose team has conceded 80 points in recent games against New Zealand and Wales, said: "If there is one game where we are going to lift ourselves, it's this one."

There have been specific efforts by individuals to play down the nationalism that has tarnished this fixture over the last few years and that found its coarsest outlet in the jeers that greeted England's successful sevens team in the World Cup tournament at Murrayfield last April. That is part consequence of the British Isles tour last summer but that same tour also gives England a psychological edge.

Jason Leonard, Brian Moore and Martin Johnson all displaced Scots between the first and second internationals against New Zealand last summer and nothing that Scotland packs have done this season suggests a substantial improvement in form. It is England's belief that Scottish scrummaging and, more specifically, lineout work should be of a higher quality today, which is not to say that England are trembling in their boots in consequence.

The advantage that England have is that all their newcomers embark on the championship as products of a victorious system. There has not been unrelieved success at B and A level but there has been sufficient to make such as Neil Back, Victor Uboqui and Philip de Glanville desperate for a taste of the real thing and that, World Cup or not, means the five nations.

They come together on a ground that encourages fast, open play and where they have a decent record of success. "We're looking for a dry day and a small crowd," Will Carling, the England captain said, referring to the last-minute work by site contractors to bring Murrayfield's West Stand up to a point where the local authorities could grant the requisite safety certificates.

To the relief of the 12,000



	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wales	1	1	0	0	29	6	2
France	1	1	0	0	35	15	2
Ireland	1	1	0	0	15	28	1
Scotland	1	0	0	1	6	23	0
England	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

RESULTS: Jan 15, France 35, Ireland 15, Wales 29, Scotland 6

FIXTURES: Today: Ireland v Wales, Scotland v England. Feb 19: England v Ireland, Wales v France, Mar 5: France v England, Ireland v Scotland, Mar 18: England v Wales, Scotland v France

squad had been pencilled in already, his players will hasten slowly into the 1994 five nations' championship. Their programme this season mirrors almost to the day that of ten years ago, when their championship was preceded by a 15-9 win over New Zealand and followed by a tour to South Africa. Rory Underwood and John Hall are still around to remind them how victory over the All Blacks flattered to deceive.

Hall won his first cap against Scotland on February 4, 1984, and took part in an 18-6 defeat. Underwood's debut came a game later and two of his first three internationals were lost before the England side finally unravelled in South Africa. Even though conditions in which the game is played are now entirely different, it does not mean that lessons of the past should be ignored.

France, the champions, sit out today as the home unions do battle. Wales in Dublin against Ireland and England



Kyran Bracken, the England scrum half, in training yesterday for the match against Scotland at Murrayfield

people who had paid £22 for tickets to sit in it, the certificates were approved, though less than 24 hours before kick-off.

They will see a match in which two individuals have much to gain: Gregor Townsend, the talented Gala stand-off half, and Back, the England flanker, England admit to knowing little about Townsend, whose reputation is as a runner rather than a kicker and whose first home international this will be.

As for Back, "I'm curious to know what he will do for the team," Cooke said. "It may be his strength, his ability to get to the breakdown quickly, to recycle ball and provide links. He may be the key that gets the extra spark from our backs. International rugby

does not always follow the same pattern [as club rugby] but it's a great stage for him."

Scotland have been lifted by the availability of three British Lions — Reed, Armstrong and Scott Hastings — but that will mean nothing if they do not erase the unforced errors that littered their 29-6 defeat by Wales when the championship opened three weeks ago.

Their management says that if they can look after the pennies — the drop-outs, the restarts, the touch finders — then the pounds will look after themselves, hoping against hope that bankruptcy does not stare them in the face for a third time.

Portrait, page 34  
The non-committed, page 35  
Border terrier, page 35

## TODAY'S TEAMS AT MURRAYFIELD

SCOTLAND	ENGLAND
A G Hastings (Watsonians)	15 J Callard (Bath)
A G Stanger (Hawick)	14 T Underwood (Leicester)
S Hastings (Watsonians)	13 W D C Carling (Harlequins)
D S Wylie (Stew-Melville FP)	12 P R de Glanville (Bath)
K M Logan (Stirling County)	11 R Underwood (Leicester/RAF)
G P J Townsend (Gala)	10 C R Andrew (Wasps)
G Armstrong (Jed-Forest)	9 K Bracken (Bristol)
A V Sharp (Bristol)	1 J Leonard (Harlequins)
K S Milne (Henric's FP)	2 B C Moore (Harlequins)
A P Burnell (London Scottish)	3 V E Uboqui (Bath)
P Watson (Northampton)	6 J P Hall (Bath)
D S Munro (Glasgow HK)	4 M C Beyfield (Northampton)
A I Reed (Bath)	5 M O Johnson (Leicester)
R I Wainwright (Edinburgh Acad)	7 N A Black (Leicester)
G W Weir (Melrose)	8 B B Clarke (Bath)

Replacements: 16 D A Stark (Boroughmunt), 17 I C Jardine (Stirling County), 18 B W Redpath (Melrose), 19 J H Smith (Gloucester), 20 A G J Watt (Glasgow High Kelvinside), 21 K D McKenzie (Stirling County).

Replacements: 16 M Calt (Bath), 17 S Barnes (Bath), 18 C D Morris (Oxford), 19 G C Rowntree (Leicester), 20 R G R Daws (Bath), 21 S O Ojomoh (Bath).

## BAF stays silent after long debate on Norman

By DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

AFTER 2½ hours discussing the Andy Norman controversy yesterday, the British Athletic Federation (BAF) would give no indication as to what progress had been made. A meeting of the BAF's management board was held behind drawn blinds at its offices in Birmingham and the issue was promoted to the top of the agenda, but afterwards officials emerged from the meeting tight-lipped.

Norman's position as the promotions officer of the BAF is under discussion after allegations that, in a phone call to Cliff Temple, the journalist and coach, he accused Temple of sexual harassment of a woman athlete. Six months later, Temple committed suicide.

The BAF's task is not to decide what connection, if any, there may have been between the phone call and Temple's suicide. Its job is to judge whether Norman's actions, if confirmed, is conduct becoming of one of its employees and, if not, whether he should be dismissed from his £65,000-a-year post.

"There is no statement to make," David Bedford, the secretary of the BAF, said. He declined to say even whether the BAF council, of which there are almost 50 members, would take up today where the management board's ten members left off yesterday.

Norman, 50, was put on the full-time staff only last July, having been promotions consultant through Britain's golden era of the Eighties. He met Peter Radford, the executive chairman of the BAF, earlier this week to give his version of events, but was not in Birmingham yesterday for the board meeting.

"We did not expect him to be here," Tony Ward, the BAF's spokesman, said. Asked why the meeting had taken as long as it did dealing with the Norman issue, Ward replied: "I have no idea. I was not in the meeting. The management board have come to the decision to give no statement tonight."

Ward added that he was no nearer to knowing whether the final decision on Norman's future rests with Radford, the management board or the council.

## Lee flies in to resume struggle for power at City

By KEITH PIKE

FRANCIS Lee returned from holiday yesterday hoping to be installed as the new chairman of Manchester City before their Premiership game against Ipswich Town this afternoon. Last night, however, negotiations with solicitors to finalise his takeover were continuing.

Lee, the former City and England winger, became the club's major shareholder last week when the former chairman, Peter Swales, and his fellow director, Stephen Boler, accepted his £3 million bid for 29.9 per cent of their stake. "The important thing is for the supporters to get behind the team," Lee said yesterday after flying back from Barbados. "Let's hope they can produce the goods and we can get some unity in the boardroom and behind the scenes."

On the future of Brian Horton, the City manager, Lee said: "I have not spoken to Brian yet and it would be unfair to comment on somebody's career if I did not employ him. Trust me, I am looking forward to the challenge, looking forward to the job, and I'm sure the fans will help us to get back on top."

Horton, appointed by Swales in August when Peter Reid was dismissed three weeks into the season, made an encouraging start but has seen his side win only one of their last 15 Premiership games. They could slip to the bottom of the table today if they lose at Swindon Town and Oldham Athletic win. Last Saturday, Horton's team were knocked out of the FA Cup by Cardiff City, of the second division.

Horton might gamble on recalling Steve McMahon, who has missed seven games because of a hamstring injury, but the City manager was frustrated by the cancellation of a midweek reserve game in which he hoped to give McMahon a full-scale fitness test.

He should, however, be boosted by the return of his goalkeeper, Tony Cotton, who was carried off with a knee injury against Cardiff, and Richard Edgill, the highly rated young full back who missed that game with a groin strain.

Norwich unrest, page 31  
Rob Hughes, page 31

## Assured Atherton prospers in leading role

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT IN ANTIGUA

AMONG the most impressive of Michael Atherton's assets is his constant air of assurance. It infuriated the Australians last summer, it helped him win election as England captain and he is already directing it at West Indian opponents to significant effect. Yesterday in St John's, his side had reason to be grateful.

Atherton has decided that he will play in all four games prior to the internationals and in this, the third of them, he apparently set out to be on the field from start to finish. Having presided over England's efficient dismissal of the Leeward Islands for 181 on Thursday, Atherton spent yesterday brushing up an already imposing batting record on the St John's ground with a diligence not shared by some of those around him.

He made a century here in the first match of the tour, sharing an opening stand of 183 with Alec Stewart in the process. Yesterday, there was another century stand for the first wicket, this time with Mark Ramprakash, as Atherton continued to indicate that the captaincy has had nothing

but a beneficial effect on his batting. It took him almost three hours to reach 50 but this should not suggest he struggled. The pitch offered increasingly uneven bounce and the Leewarders, even without their Test players, possessed four challenging fast bowlers. This four-day game was already

well advanced, there was no need to rush and so Atherton proceeded at his chosen pace. He appeared to have matters well in command as tea approached with only one wicket down and England's deficit down to 64. But an over of all sorts from John Maynard, including two bouncers, a no-ball and two wickets, not

only helped level the contest but also did little for the Test preparations of Graham Thorpe and Graeme Hick. Thorpe had batted 45 minutes for 11 when he followed a ball slanted across him. Then came a cameo of the enigmatic Hick at his worst. Hit on the pads first ball, he then ducked two short ones and missed a

no-ball before launching an ugly, flat-footed drive and being caught behind off the inside edge.

It was an extraordinary lapse by one whose role in this side is far from established. It also exposed Nasser Hussain, who needed a substantial innings more than anyone, at an unfortunate moment. "Under pressure" is the reggae song belted out on the speaker system here at every opportunity. For Hussain, it was unwelcomingly apt, but he survived until tea, which England reached at 145 for three.

One vacant batting place seems to have been claimed now, Ramprakash having followed up his century in St Kitts with 41 as opener. It is a position to which he may have to become accustomed if, later in the series, expediency again dictates that Alec Stewart keeps wicket and bats down the order.

If yesterday's proceedings caused the umpires hardly a moment's concern, the same is most unlikely to be true of the Test series and the International Cricket Council has not been uncontroversial in its choice of independent officials, announced yesterday.

Standing in the first Test at Sabina Park, on which so

much depends, will be Ian Robinson, from Zimbabwe. Highly regarded during the 1992 World Cup, Robinson's Test match experience has been restricted to a share of the duties in his country's only three home Tests to date.

The independent umpire for the second and third Tests will be the former India off-spinner, Srinivas Venkataraghavan, and the last two games will be officiated by Darryl Hair, ranked so far ahead of any other Australian umpire that he has stood in all six Tests there this winter.

Some contentious leg before decisions by Hair, however, were the catalyst for Peter Kirsten handing over most of his match fee in fines during the Adelaide Test last week and it would be fair to say that the South Africans went home with an uncomplicated view of him.

LEEWARD ISLANDS: First Innings 181-10, W. Maynard 65, C. C. Lewis 3-21, A. R. Coddie 3-21.

ENGLAND 10, First Innings 50  
M R Ramprakash lbw b Anthony 41  
G P Thorpe c Jacobs b Maynard 11  
G A Hick c Jacobs b Maynard 12  
N Hussain not out 29  
Extras 22  
Total (5 wickets) 145  
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-106, 2-127, 3-128  
M P Maynard, R O Russell, C C Lewis, I D N Satchell, A R Coddie, and S L Watson to bat.  
Umpires: P Wylie and J Stevens



Mike Gatting, the former England captain, selects his team yesterday to help readers in The Times 1st XI game. Full details on page 30. Photograph: Ron Fairly

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Page 7

# WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY FEBRUARY 5 1994

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## AA's potent network

A member of Alcoholics Anonymous  
describes the secret and powerful club

In a smoky Chelsea restaurant last week the loudest laughter came from a table where people were drinking only coffee and mineral water. Most evenings in this café, and in several others nearby, members of Alcoholics Anonymous outnumber "normal" customers by four to one. This is the case every night of the week after local AA meetings, which most members attend two or three times a week.

The coffee and bottled-water drinkers include actors, musicians, managers, producers, politicians, aristocrats, former park-bench drinkers, convicted murderers who have served their time and ordinary middle-class, middle-aged office workers like me.

I did not know when I took it

that the triple vodka and tomato juice that I drank in the stinking back room of an after-hours pub would be my last alcoholic drink to date. It was 12.30am on May 16, 1985, and I was the last person to leave that party of oblivion. I have no idea why that drink and no other inspired me to phone Alcoholics Anonymous at 3am. But that one call propelled me not only into a life of unimagined sobriety, but also into a social whirl I had never encountered anywhere else. The friends I have made in AA have salvaged what was left of my career, and involvement in the structure of the organisation has landed me in a

hotbed of politicking, intrigue and emotional trauma.

My first AA meeting was at lunchtime in a synagogue in central London. I found myself seated between a famous actor and a former down-and-out and opposite a row of young, blonde women dripping with gold — the ladies who used to lunch. This was my introduction to a place where marriages are broken and put back together, where reputations are made and lost

and where deals are done. Take Jack, a former bank manager from the North East who had been unemployed for some years. After a few meetings in Chelsea and the West End, Jack began to acquire the cut-glass accent of his sponsor, an former public school boy who runs his own international company. Jack then invented a double-barrelled name for himself, and took the City by

storm. He is now a successful stockbroker and, typically of AA members, he is also an unstinting voluntary worker with drunks — in his case at hostels and in prisons. Sponsors are intended to be good friends to newcomers and to guide them with a detached but loving hand.

Another member of my AA group was a glamorous American woman who met an internationally renowned singer through the organisation. She became his PA, flying around the world with him and enjoying all the trappings of celebrity

life. A close friend of mine is now president of a world-wide PR company — all thanks to a powerful contact from an AA member. In turn she now employs many AA members in her company.

One member says: "The 12-step programme, which was developed by AA, is so well-thought of in America that some employers exercise positive discrimination at corporate level in favour of members of AA. It follows that everyone wants a part of this. They realise that this is where the fun is to be had."

The AA's Twelve Steps, which aim to put members on the road to sobriety, can be summarised roughly as an ad-

mission of powerlessness over alcohol, a belief in a higher power or God, a confession of past wrongs to a sponsor or close friend (many choose a priest for this), a willingness to change and a commitment to helping others still suffering the effects of alcohol. Insiders are also familiar with the Thirteenth Step, a shameful, unwritten addition to AA's programme. This is the sexual seduction of a newcomer, someone less than a year sober, by an old-timer, usually of the opposite sex. This "step" is widely condemned by sponsors of newcomers.

Sponsors can themselves be capable of abuse. They have been known to charge by the hour for their help, to take over newcomers' lives, to force them to end relationships or change jobs.

I soon discovered that every Alcoholics Anonymous group has its own character. One West London meeting is known as Stars on Sunday, because of the number of minor celebrities and groupies who attend. In the West End the so-called Gold Card meeting invites only wealthy and famous members.

Doctors and dentists hold their own private meetings. There are women's AA meetings, men's meetings, lesbian and gay meetings, agnostics' meetings. There are meetings I would describe as fundamentalist, where the Twelve Steps — never the Thirteenth — are followed religiously. At the other extreme are grim meetings where extended sobriety is rare, resentment rife and faces burning with hatred stare at the day's speaker.

Some meetings have unscrupulous members. I shall not forget the day a photographer, tipped off by a member, turned up to snap an unfortunate celebrity who happened to be there. The photo-

grapher was attacked by a roomful of raging former drunks, who tore the film from his camera and sent him away bruised and beaten. AA has more than its share of ex-cons.

It is wrong to describe AA as a cult or a religion. Its members describe it as "anarchic" because the organisation has no official leaders. But AA is openly spiritual. Its literature suggests that belief in a higher power must be developed if sanity and sobriety are to be restored. The form this belief takes is left to each member.

My family and friends felt I was being brain-washed. I felt that if anyone's brain needed a wash it was mine, and their fears have disappeared as my life has improved beyond recognition.

Each of the 94,000 AA groups in 134 countries is autonomous. Members do not even have to describe themselves as "alcoholic". The only requirement is a desire to stop drinking, and that need only be for today. Anyone who can state that they do not wish to drink on any particular day can attend one of more than 500 weekly meetings in London, or more than 3,000 in the UK.

The organisation grew slowly in Britain after its first meeting at the Dorchester on March 31, 1947, which was led by an American. AA had been founded on June 10, 1935, in the United States. The seed was planted and the fellowship began slowly to grow here, but recently in the UK there has been an explosion of membership, especially in London.

Many people stay in AA because they enjoy the dances, the parties, the outings, the extended social life. Lifetime friendships are forged through AA although the bond rarely survives a lapse into drinking by one or other. I know of a dozen marriages which have been made between AA members — although they rarely seem to last, maybe because of the innate emotional immaturity of many alcoholics. Rich AA members are often generous with their time and resources: a world-famous celebrity regularly takes AA parties of up to 12 on holiday to his villa abroad. I am involved in organising a summer dance in the home counties. Barbeques are also popular.

The camaraderie is strong, and so is the desire to be together, to share each other's difficulties and triumphs and every up and down. For many, the addiction to AA becomes a problem. Some say that being in AA is like changing cabins on the Titanic. For me it was the lifeline that saved me from an ocean of drink in which I had tried to drown my sorrows.

He turned freelance 18 years ago and has walked with Wainwright, presented *Brass Tacks*, done *File on 4* and has covered the state opening of Parliament. Few, if any, broadcasters on radio and television, can rival his range. Only the mention of light entertainment makes him cringe.

When Clay Jones retired last year, the Prince of Wales was rumoured to be in line for the job. So too were Roddy Llewellyn, Keith Floyd and many others. Even Mr Blobby got a mention. But none of them, says Trevor Taylor, head of Taylor Made Films, were in the running.

"I'm sure the *Gardeners' Question Time* audience is very kind. So I hope they give me at least a month before they start to chew my ears off," says Mr Robson.

In the old days, the long hair would certainly have got in the way of that.

CHRISTIAN DYMOND

Eric Robson, the chairman elect of Radio 4's *Gardeners' Question Time*, reveals his horticultural and thespian roots

## Radio in earthy hands

What fruit or vegetable would you like to come back as? "Rhubarb," Eric Robson, 47, replies unequivocally. "That seems to fit quite well with broadcasting." And what about parsnips and politicians? "Most parsnips are better to interview than politicians," he says.

The 1.3 million listeners to Radio 4's weekly *Gardeners' Question Time* can rest assured that the programme's new presenter is suitably down-to-earth. "My greatest strength as a broadcaster is my ordinariness," he says.

What else could he be but earthy, living on a 60-acre farm in one of the wettest parts of west Cumbria, with mud and muck half way up his legs at this time of the year, a garden and orchard to cultivate, pedigree pigs, Clydesdale horses, hill sheep and cattle to look after?

The farm is where the call came from the independent production company, Taylor Made Films, which will take over the running of *Gardeners' Question Time* on Easter Sunday, the same day as Mr Robson takes the chair. The first programme will be broadcast

from the International Spring Garden Fair at Olympia.

"My response was instant," says Mr Robson. "It was one of those decisions I didn't have to think about because it's a classic programme, one with a very loyal audience and one I listen to myself."

"To take over a show which has been part of my enjoyment of radio for years is tremendous."

The downside is that I'm not going to have that half-hour relaxation every Sunday because my ego doesn't run to listening to my own programmes. I'll have to find something else to do — perhaps keep the garden a bit tidier."

He is primarily a vegetable man, a "gardener for the pot," he says. His potatoes are of the old-fashioned varieties, Arran Victory, Kerr's Pink and Sharp's Express; he grows salsify and scorzonera; and his asparagus bed is in its second year.

"I'm a very ordinary gardener

and I make all the mistakes that everyone else does, although I hope fewer and fewer as time goes on," he says. After 15 years of presenting gardening programmes such as BBC's *The Allotment Show* and *Earthmovers* on Tyne Tees Television, something will undoubtedly have rubbed off.

So, if he is not being hired as a gardening expert — "my grasp of horticultural Latin is about as good as Arthur Daley's," he says — what will he be bringing to *Gardeners' Question Time*?

"I'm there to make it reasonably entertaining and not let the expert gardeners go into a muddle and



Eric Robson — "my greatest strength is my ordinariness"

talk about things that people at home don't understand," he says.

As well as the team of gardening experts on the panel, there is also a body of expertise in the places where they record the programmes. "The panel will be able to answer the question, but I bet

there's somebody in that hall who's had the same problem themselves and also worked out an answer to it. So I hope I will capture some of that as well," he says.

Audience participation is nothing new. Nor will the regular panel — Fred Downham, Sue Phillips, Daphne Ledward and current chairman Dr Stefan Buczacki — change, apart

from the occasional guest panellist. "There'll be virtually no change," Mr Robson says.

Mr Robson was born in Newcastle, in the Scottish Borders, where his father was a fireman and ambulance man. At five he moved to Carlisle, where as

a schoolboy he harboured dreams of becoming an actor.

The nearest he got was a qualification in stage design, although he has just finished writing a Victorian melodrama for the local village school in west Cumbria called *The Mysterious Stranger* or *It's Better to be Wanted for Murder than not to be Wanted at All*. He is beating the young cast into shape most Thursday lunchtimes.

"I did have a place at drama college, but my parents wanted me to go to university. So we compromised and I went to neither," he says. Instead he went to work for Pickfords furniture removers and then on to Border Television in Carlisle, where he spent ten years, ending up as a reporter and presenter.

Sitting across the table from him I notice that he has had a fairly heavy pruning since then — the

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## Psychologists under attack



Against: Fay Weldon



For: Anthony Clare

TO coincide with the publication of *Affliction*, Fay Weldon's scathing attack on psychoanalysis, *The Times* and Dillons the Bookstore are hosting a debate on the value of therapy. Presenting her very personal views on the "institution which claims to treat all forms of disease and disorder", Miss Weldon will lead the discussion. Challenging her will be Britain's most prominent psychologist, Professor Anthony Clare, whose television and radio series have uncovered some astonishing insights into the psyches of the famous.

The debate, to be chaired by Libby Purves, will take place on Wednesday, February 23, at 7.30pm, at Westminster Central Hall, Storey's Gate, London SW1.

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TOS2

With 17 challenging courses — and sun, sea and sand — the Algarve is a great lure to holidaymakers

When the Portugal tourist board approved the building of 14 golf courses in as many years, it was not trying to embarrass inert holidaymakers. It had come to realise that there is no more lucrative form of tourism than golf.

Tourism is Portugal's greatest industry. Parts of the Algarve are now so Anglicised and developed that there is scant trace of its old charm. Vale do Lobo, its prime resort and one of the most expensive areas in Portugal, is Stockbroker Belt-on-Sea. There are 100,000 rounds played each year on its golf course alone.

Vale do Lobo is not the best-known course in the Algarve — the Penina, near Portimão, was designed by Henry Cotton in 1966 and has been used for numerous championships — but it is probably the most difficult to play on. You have to be a very precise performer to cope with narrow fairways that fall away to the sea, hemmed in by the pine trees and eucalyptus so typical of this coastline.

You also need to have salted away a fair amount of capital to live there. The most expensive plot for sale, next to Vale do Lobo's golf course, and thus among the most expensive plots in Portugal, costs £850 per square metre. It overlooks the fairway and the beach, and is less than 200 yards from the sea. Neighbours include Judith Chalmers, the television presenter of holiday programmes, and her husband Neil Darden-Smith, at the ninth hole. Also to be found playing there, off varying handicaps, are Elton John, Lord Forte and Sir Denis Thatcher.

Despite the very British feel to the place, there is no doubting that the courses and the abutting villas have been skilfully and tastefully designed. You are much better off staying on the fairways than in a shack down the road if intending to play regularly: daily green fees are halved for residents.

## The sporting place for a sunny tee at any time



Vale do Lobo is the Algarve's prime resort, where about 100,000 rounds of golf are played each year

The villa owners, as opposed to those who hire properties, are of a type. It was during the Thatcher years that development proceeded almost unabated on the Algarve. Then, a second home or early retirement in a climate so temperate that golf and other sports could be played all the year round — pensioners were swimming in the Atlantic on Christmas Day — was for many an attractive enticement.

In Vale do Lobo there are facilities

for 25 sports, including tennis at Roger Taylor's centre. England's cricketers trained there before going on their tour of the West Indies and footballers from all over Europe go there for mid-season breaks. Their venue, Club Barringtons, has a cricket ground and a driving range, where those with rustic swings practise before heading for the nearby course, or a few miles up the coast to Quinta do Lago.

Quinta has 600 acres designed for

players of all standards, a course rich in wild flowers and herbal vegetation. "It is the ultimate fair challenge," says Stuart Woodman, chief executive. "The ball hits so well for players. Television has been a shop window for golf: people of all classes play and some make it to the top."

There are 17 courses in the Algarve, within easy distance of Faro airport. At Palmareis, which has views of the Monchique mountains, five of the 18 holes are laid out on sand dunes

beside the Atlantic. At the sixth hole at Parque da Floresta, near the old town of Lagos, you have to drive over a vineyard. The seventh hole at Vale do Lobo has a 240-yard carry over two ravines on the cliff top high above the beach. With variable breezes and a ravenous bunker in front of the shallow green, making par is an achievement indeed.

The balls that are sliced on to the beach are so numerous that the club shop has to ensure a constant supply of replacements. "This is our biggest profit maker," jokes Marc van Gelder, the chief executive of the Vale do Lobo group of companies.

Profit is the bottom line for Portugal's tourist board. Yet there is another reason for its promotion of golf. The government is after a certain class of tourist and has set up a funding agency to help the Algarve Golf Association bring more players to the country. "It realises they are not going to be tattooed hooligans," says Stuart Woodman, the chief executive of Quinta do Lago, who, on the afternoon we met, had entertained former President Gerald Ford on the course.

As the Algarve is now the prime area for round-the-year golf, it is hard to resist the observation that there are plenty more where he came from.

IVO TENNANT

● TAP Air Portugal (071-828 0262) and British Airways (081-897 4000) fly daily from London to Faro. Superflex fares from £139. Examples of package golfing holidays: British Airways Holidays (reservations 0203 611311); golfing enquiries 0293 572899) offers seven nights at Club Barringtons from £416 (March 9-24). Caravela Tours (071-630 5182) offers a seven-night holiday in the Algarve, March-April, with bed and car included, from £69 (March-April) per person based on two people sharing a double room. For further information, contact the Portuguese National Tourist Office, 2nd Floor, 22/25A, Sackville Street, London W1X 1DE (071-94 1441).

## Learning to ski at 50? It's downhill all the way

A father goes back to the nursery to learn what the children do easily

THEY laughed, of course. The man in the sports shop, uncharitable colleagues and the girl who runs the aerobic classes in my local gym. And then there were the amateur doctors: it's dangerous if you've had back surgery, you're too old to learn, you'll break a leg.

All I wanted to do was to learn to ski. A little late at the age of 50, perhaps, but put that down to a misspent youth in Africa. But why all the fuss?

Stumbling down a hill into the Austrian village of Lech laden with skis, poles and swaddled in thermal underwear, knee pads, a stretchy back support (OK, corset) tee shirt, polo-neck jersey, neck warmer, headband, two sets of goggles (one in case it snowed) and a space-age ski suit with stitched-in radio beepers (in case of burial by avalanche), I began to share the general doubts. The clunking great boots didn't help. They proved paralytically painful after I had heaved myself barely 50 yards from the pension.

Half a mile and 20 minutes later, I just about summoned up the energy to shake hands with the instructor, Gottfried Hofer, on the nursery slopes above the village.

With slate-grey eyes and a hawk nose perched on a carpet-sweeper moustache, Herr Hofer looked a hard man. He waved me towards eight other beginners, who were trudging around on skis in a large circle. Tramping in a foot of freshly fallen snow, with skis attached to your feet for the first time, is hard work; so is trying to walk up a slope sideways with your skis on; and slithering down again, and going up again.

Herr Hofer was a hard man. After two hours I was

exhausted and prepared to give up on this mid-life rite of passage. No matter that for weeks I had been pounding away in the gym, working up leg strength, and running myself silly on the treadmill. This was different. This was hellish.

If Day One left me shattered, Day Two was a disaster. I had woken up with calf muscles like tauntened barbed wire. It was snowing hard. My all-German group, four youngsters in their twenties and three forty-something oldies, seemed to love the idea of learning to ski in a blizzard. They glowed with enthusiasm as Herr Hofer drove us up and down the nursery slopes. No sooner had we just about learned to stop by snow-ploughing the skis into a V shape than it was left turns, and right turns.

The others loved it. Especially the girls. They were pretty, they laughed a lot and they didn't fall over. I did, over and over again. After one spectacular departure from the piste and a flying header into virgin snow, Herr Hofer looked down at me with a rare smile cracking the frework of icicles on his moustache. "James you are a little early into the powder. We don't go off until the last day. Ho ho."

At this stage we were going half way up the nursery slopes using a button lift, a disc on a pole which you jam between your legs, and skiing — sort of — down. And all the time, across the valley, lay the real slopes — sheets of vertical snow, or so they seemed, with black dots whizzing down them. Thank god for the nursery slopes. We clung to them like Koala bears, because skiing is about confi-



James MacManus, right, looking every fashionable inch the nonchalant skier, sets out on the slopes above Lech

dence as much as technique.

The next day morning, Herr Hofer marched across Lech's pleasant little high street and herded us into chairlifts for a terrifying ride some 3,000ft into the sunlit uplands of western Austria. Great view, Herr Hofer, but how do we get down...? The icicles on his moustache cracked again. There was just one way — down.

Even the German girls looked a little cowed. This was a blue route, supposedly the easiest of all; and we were frightened. Well, I was. The rest did it in some style, and I just did it.

For 30 minutes we skied down a mountain and lived to drink a jug of peppery glühwein at the bottom. It had taken just four days to learn to ski.

The rest of the group went on to higher and better things, but I peeled off to go sledging with my children, drink more glühwein in the open-air bars along the high street and take cable cars to improbably remote restaurants, where the waitresses cut up the children's spaghetti for them.

Lech likes children, and starts them skiing almost as soon as they can walk. Language is no problem, and children as young as three can have a whole morning's tuition on the slopes without a parent in sight. They take to it like swallows in the wind. Adults have to learn the hard way.

JAMES MACMANUS

### How to get to Lech and what it costs

□ James MacManus travelled to Lech courtesy of the Austrian Tourist Board in London. For details call 071-629 0461.

□ Austrian Holidays (071-434 7399) sell package tours to Lech staying at the 39-room Churris pension in the centre of the village close to ski lifts. One week's holiday, including return flight to Innsbruck from Heathrow, in a twin room with b&b, but excluding airport-hotel transfer, cost from £430 (February and March). Flights leave at 4pm on Saturdays.

□ Independent travellers will find the Spilliersee apartments, five minutes from the centre of Lech, offers excellent accommodation in a chalet-style building, serviced by the Felsenhof

Pension next door (010 43 5583 2524). Modern flats, which have two bedrooms, sitting-room, kitchen, bathroom and separate shower, and will sleep up to six, cost about £280 a day for two people, with an £8 supplement per extra person. Breakfast is £6 a head.

□ Six days' ski tuition in a group of eight is £75 each. A ski pass for this period costs £100. Five days' tuition for children three-ten costs £70.

□ First-time skiers face a large outlay on equipment. The agency Snow and Rock (0753 830868) provides a mail-order service. Fischer Elliptic skis for learners cost about £80 with bindings; Nordica Synchro F7 boots are the same price. Two-piece ski suits cost £400-£450.

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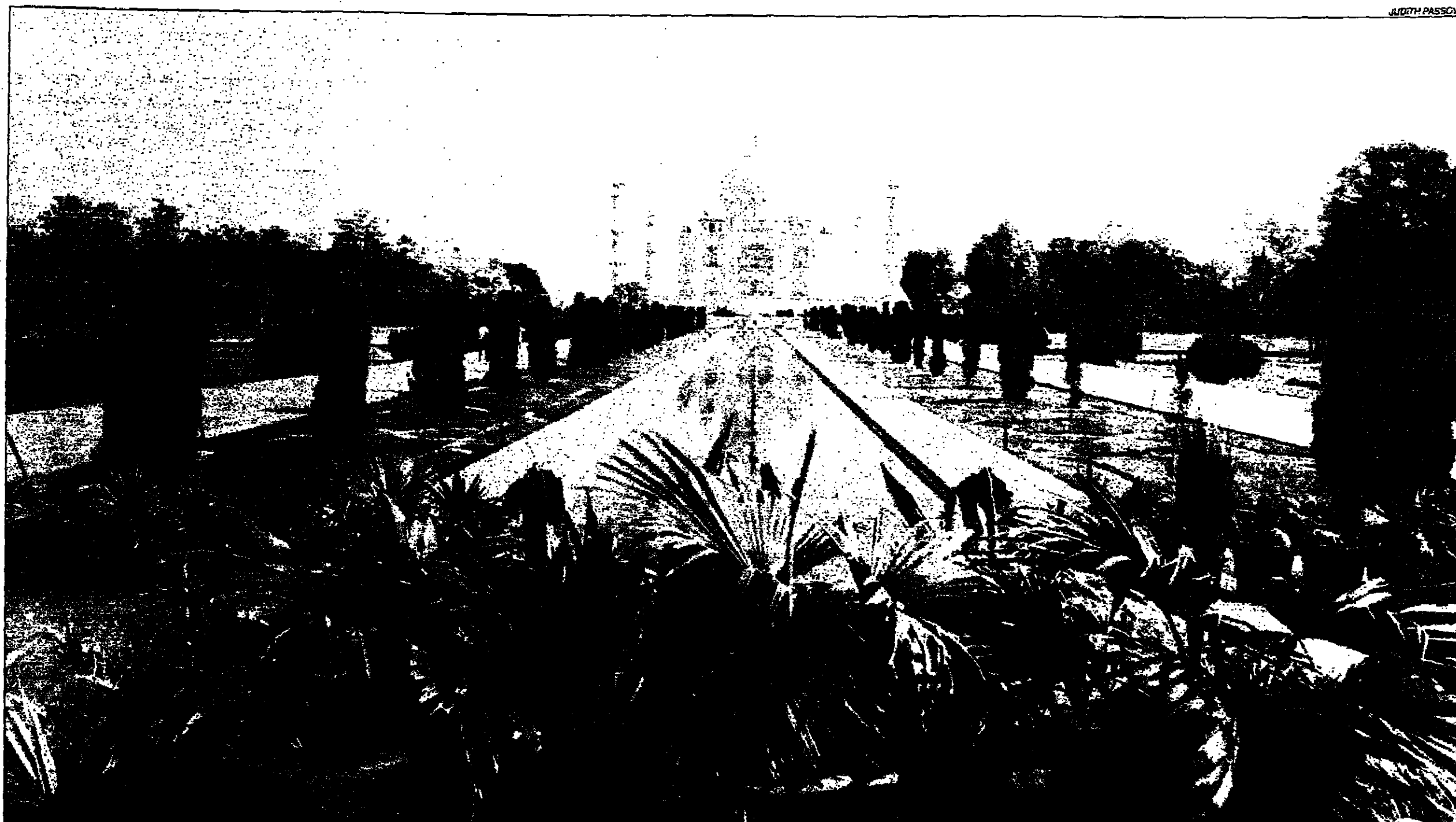
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Even local people are lost for words before the breathtaking beauty of the Taj Mahal at Agra, making it probably the quietest place in India, a country of maddening frustration and endless fascination — "India is not a holiday, it is 'an experience'"

## Full tilt into the heat and the dust

A nine-day tour of India can be a maddening whirl of noise and confusion, but from the Taj Mahal to the street markets the magic is seductive and irresistible

The streets are ablaze with colour, the vast army of beggars is on the move, rickshaw wallahs are shouting for business, cars are honking their horns. The air is filled with a bewildering cacophony of sounds and chatter. "Shoe shine, shoe shine. Bananas, bananas." It is four o'clock in the morning in Delhi — a calm and welcome port of call at the end of an exhausting nine-day tour of India.

Nothing prepares you for this vast, unrelenting land: frayed tempers, the endless bureaucracy — a legacy from the British. Travelling is hazardous. The colours, noises, and aromas mount a constant assault on the senses. It is exhilarating. Maddening. It is a relief to get home. But you cannot wait to return. India is not a holiday, it is "an experience".

Once you have left the swirling cauldron of the railway station, the pace slows in Delhi — slightly. Sightseeing must be done by day. In the evening an all-pervading smog hangs over the city. Delhi, the imperial capital created by the British, boasts wide open spaces, colourful parks, and dangerous roads.



Folk singers in Rajasthan, home of the Rajput warriors

"In England," the helpful guide explained, "you drive on the right. So do we. But we also drive on the left." Officially, they drive on the left — as we do — but also in the middle, and on the verges.

The city's Red Fort, built at the height of the Mogul empire in 1648, is one of the most memorable sights. The emperor, Shah Jahan, used to ride from the fort on an elephant in an ostentatious show of power. Few defied him. The most around the fort was filled with crocodiles, which were fed every time he replaced a member of his harem. They were fat crocodiles.

The fort, built of red sandstone, is typically Indian. The moment you arrive you are beset from all sides by would-

be guides proffering their services for "only a few rupees". Once you have fought your way through the mêlée of musicians, rope climbers and snake charmers, the fort is a restful haven from the noise, dirt and dust of the city streets.

There is a simple shrine, a square of black marble, where Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were cremated — and later Indira and Rajiv Gandhi. After a whirlwind tour of the markets (the prices are so low!) I abandoned the five-star luxury of the Oberoi Hotel — a personal butler on each floor, air conditioning, excellent cuisine — to fly to Jaipur.

An internal flight in India is a dubious pleasure. Everything is delayed. The lavam-



Gate at the Amber Palace

ries are unmentionable and the tea undrinkable. Customs take forever. Don't eat the food; don't look out of the window; sleep if you can.

Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan, is known as the pink city because of its sandstone walls. The landscape is arid. Barren hills dotted with ancient fortresses. The town, with large tree-lined avenues, is dominated by seven pink gates. Be careful about haggling in the street markets.

This is home to the Rajput warriors, who fought to the end even when all hope was lost. Their women and children threw themselves on a huge funeral pyre when the men rode to certain death at the hand of the enemy.

In Jaipur, tourists are subjected to the cruel and horrifying spectacle of chained dancing bears, but drivers never curse the sacred cows sleeping in the street. They blame each other for the resulting traffic jams.

The old capital, Amber, is about seven miles up in the rocky hills, with the Amber Palace the focal point. The imposing building looks austere from the outside but inside the walls are bedecked with jewels, paintings, col-

oured glass and carved marble. There are panoramic views of the mountainous landscape with deserted palaces seemingly floating on lakes, giving the region an almost fairy-tale quality.

Go there by elephant. But even perched on Nellie, there is no escape from the street chaos. Beggars circle the elephant, pipers serenade you with unwanted music, traders pounce from their tree perches. The gaily painted elephants make ponderous progress in the suffocating midday heat. But they are a valuable natural resource, and are protected by what is probably the world's only trade union for elephants.

Bombay, which was next on the itinerary, makes Delhi seem like Eastbourne in winter. You cannot avoid the notorious slums as you approach in the steaming city heat: families queue for water, bullocks plough fields, and run-down shacks sprawl untidily. The heaving, seething city of Bombay is racked by poverty and despair even though it is the economic powerhouse of India.

The elegance of the Bombay Oberoi Hotel, with its spectacular view of the Arabian Sea, was another welcome haven from the maddening crowds. One school of thought argues that if you stay somewhere as opulent as an Oberoi, you miss the real India. The other, and the one I subscribe to, says that during such a short trip, calm, civilised surroundings, with fine Indian cuisine, are an essential antidote to the chaos.

The hotel is opposite Chaopany Beach, a feast of sand sculptors, artists and acrobats but no swimmers. "Dysentery every time you tread water," a local explained.

Shopping in Bombay, as in any other part of India, is a question of the survival of the fittest. Mutton Street market is a ragbag collection of jewellery, pottery, spare parts

for cars, junk and beggars. Rickshaw wallahs tout for business. Be warned: many are high on hashish. Be prepared for the inevitable onslaught of the beggars, some horribly mutilated, hanging on to your shorts, your bag, walking in front of you, behind you, all around you. They prefer English money and know the value of silver and coppers. They do not take no for an answer. Total silence is the best rebuttal. I once made the mistake of handing over some cash; Madonna could not have attracted such a frenzied mob so quickly.

Included in the trip was a foray into Bangalore, the capital of Karnataka state, which is one of the fastest growing cities in the world. Bangalore was once a fertile garden city and home to retired gentilefolk. Now it has little to offer.

However, the 150-year-old

Bangalore Club — women excluded from the bars — seemed straight from the set of *A Passage to India*. In fact, I discovered, it was. Pride of place in the membership book is a handwritten reference to the unpaid subscription of 13 rupees owed by Winston Churchill in 1899, when he was an army officer, an "irrecoverable sum" which was being written off by the management sub-committee.

The highlight was always going to be Agra. I arrived at dawn by train. Executive class. As we hurtled through the ever changing countryside I saw a vision of British Rail's privatisation: hundreds of locals fighting to get into dingy unlit carriages on ramshackle old trains.

The forgotten city of Fatehpur Sikri, about 30 miles from Agra, took 16 years to build but within 17 years was abandoned because the water ran out. Some 400 years later

it is a perfectly preserved Mogul city. The fact that it has been empty for centuries gives it a serene atmosphere. There is a mosque, a 150ft-high "Gate of Victory" to mark the emperor's military successes in southern India, a shrine for childless women, palaces, courtyards, halls and towers.

Then on to the Taj Mahal. Standing at last before this majestic and mighty shrine, resplendent in its marble glory, is a profoundly moving experience. It bewitches you. For once, even the Indians seem lost for words. You could have heard a pin drop. No wonder people stay so long.

ANDREW PIERCE

■ Tailor-made tours similar to this one are offered by specialist tour operators Cox & Kings (071-931 9106) and Discover India (081-429 3300). Cox & Kings 14-day tour, with all flights, trains and five-star hotels (room only, single supplement £250) costs £1,500.



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DAY 6 ATHENS; VISIT THE ACROPOLIS AND NATIONAL MUSEUM. DAY 7 THESSALONIKI WITH ITS CELEBRATED MUSEUM AND TREASURES FROM VERGINA. DAY 8 CANAKKALE TO EXPLORE TROY AND VISIT GALLI POLI. DAY 9 DELLOS WITH ITS EXTENSIVE RUINS, AND PRETTY TYNOS. DAY 10 SANTORINI FOR THERA OR AKROTIRI. DAY 11 ITEA FOR MAGICAL DELPHI; ITHACA TO OVERNIGHT IN PORT.

DAY 12 RELAX AT SEA. DAY 13 SYRACUSE — MOST BEAUTIFUL CITY OF THE GREEK WORLD. DAY 14 NAPLES FOR POMPEII OR HERCULANEUM. DAY 15 FLY NAPLES — LONDON.





In a new series, Jane MacQuitty describes how to define your palate in order to pick the wines best suited to you

## RESTAURANT WATCH

The latest news on eating out

### BELLY DANCE

The Valley of the Kings  
Elizabeth Hotel, 162  
Cromwell Road, London  
SW5 (071-370-4282)  
London's first all-Egyptian restaurant features a pyramid, a reproduction of the ceiling of Tutankhamun's tomb, soapstone murals and cooking by chef Esmat Farid; for example, *baba ghanoug* (aubergine and sesame purée (£2.85)), *bessara* (garlicky bean puree dip (£3.25)), *molokhia* (a soupy "King's dish" of leafy summer vegetable (£9.50)), and *tagen hamya* (lamb and lamb stewed in a traditional earthenware pot (£9.50)). During Ramadan, February 11 to March 12, the restaurant will be serving breakfast menus from 4.30-7.30pm, from £18.50 for four courses. Regular hours: 6.30-10.30pm, seven days a week.

### AMERICAN PIE

Captain Tony's Pizza and Pasta Emporium  
41 Lafone Street, London  
SE1 (071-378-7373)  
Franchised from a family operation in Rochester, NY, Captain Tony's bills itself, surprisingly, as "one of the quietest places in London". Apart from various pastas, and pizzas any way you want them, there are also daily specials. Average spend £9.59. Sun-Thur, 11am-midnight; Fri-Sat, 11am-1am.

### ON THE MOVE

Epicurean  
On the Park, Eyesham Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire (0242-223466)  
Newly Michelin-starred, Patrick McDonald and sous-chef Jason Lynas will be leaving the On the Park hotel later this year and setting up a new Epicurean, and a bistro, in the centre of Cheltenham. Meanwhile, set lunches are £17.50, and dinners £25 for two courses or £35 for three. Tues-Sun (except Sun dinner), 12.30-2.30pm and 7.30-10pm.

ROBIN YOUNG

# Discover your taste in wine

Finding out which wines suit you and which don't could take a lifetime and cost a lot of money. It is not that the mechanics of taste are in any way mysterious. Most of us know that the tongue is only capable of detecting sweetness, saltiness, bitterness and acidity. We know that we actually taste through the brain's olfactory centre and that a wine's aromas arrive there via two paths, the nose and the air passage at the back of the throat: together these create the illusion that it is the tongue, not the olfactory centre that is doing the tasting. This also explains why those suffering from heavy colds find that their sense of taste has gone.

Failing to understand the olfactory centre's role may well have hampered your enjoyment of wine in the past. So from now on do not let ignorance of these basic tasting parameters obscure your path to the best wines for your palate.

However, as scientists and wine makers admit, the physiology of taste is complex. What may be a magic wine to you could well be muck to me, and there is growing genetic evidence to support the theory that people taste things differently. In other words, scientists are aware that wine drinkers' genetic-biochemical differences affect the way they taste and the wines they like or dislike. The dubious ability, for instance, to smell the peculiarly grassy odour in urine after eating asparagus is not shared by all and is controlled by one dominant gene that your human blueprint may, or may not, have. I am convinced that the same sort of sensitivity exists in wine tasting.

American geneticists in charge of the international Human Genome Project claim they will be able to chart the genetic make-up of an individual, including the business of smell, by the end of the century. Given that there are apparently three billion characters in the human genetic code, each with its own function and distinctive trait, along with millions of deviations in each individual, I doubt whether the scientists will succeed so soon, or at all.

During the next three weeks, I shall attempt to unravel the mysteries of your palate and make sense of what, until now, has been an unknown quantity.

A good place to start is with the



But then, some of the best Gallic wine tasters are chain-smokers

food you eat regularly, and the garnishes and condiments you use most. But remember, as all mothers know, babies are born with super-sensitive palates and digestions: only the blandest food suits. Similarly, the elderly's jaded palates are often stimulated only by large quantities of salt, pepper, mustard, horseradish sauce and the like. The palate preferences of the rest of us probably lie somewhere in between. But be warned: if you cannot eat anything unless it is covered in salt, or your favourite meal is curry, or you are a very heavy smoker, your perception of wine will be different, perhaps less sensitive, than those with less aggressive tastes. Nevertheless, some of the best Gallic wine tasters I know are chain-smokers, so palates that have preferences such as these must compensate in some way.

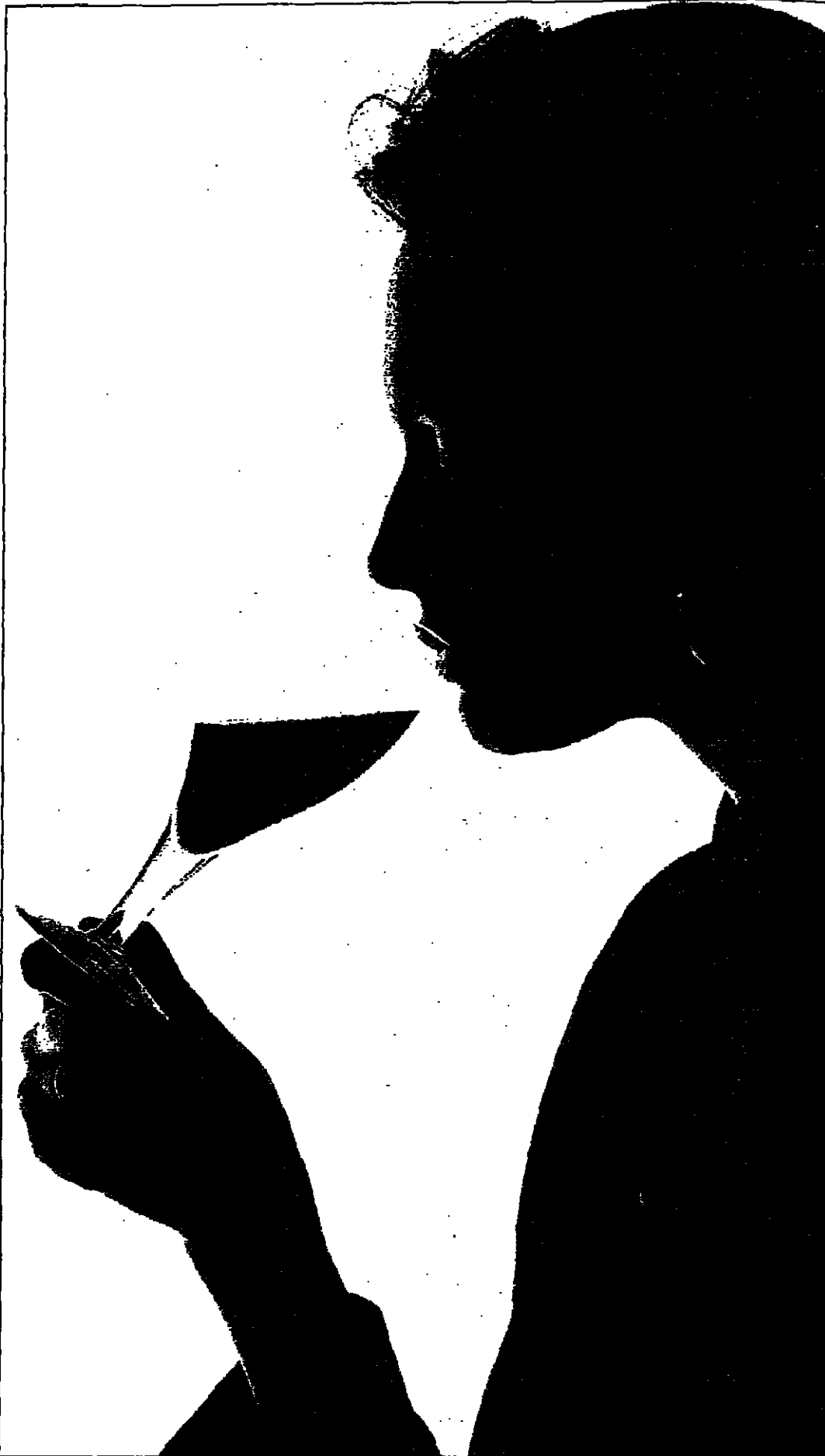
Getting to grips with your own palate could start with the knowledge that your desire for spicy condiments, such as pickles and chutneys, probably means that you will like spicy wines such as those made from Alsace's or Germany's gewürztraminer grape. Equally, if you squeeze lemon juice over everything from chicken and veal to fish, the chances are you will enjoy dry, lively, acidic white wines, such as chablis and saignée. Those who add butter to every dish, from vegetables to red meat, are likely to prefer richer, more buttery wines, such as a good chardonnay from the Côte d'Or, California or Australia. If your palate's idea of heaven is a plate of smoked salmon, kippers, charcuterie or cheeses, your celestial wine could well be one that has matured for a long time in oak and is blessed with plenty of smoky-toasty flavours, such as rioja.

Fans of specific fruits and their juices will find it even easier to ascertain their favourite wines. Apple-eaters will enjoy the apple scents of chenin blanc and riesling wines, grapefruit-eaters will appreciate Germany's scheurebe, blackcurrant devotees bottles of cabernet, and pineapple fans the chardonnay grape, wherever it is grown. If your taste is for citrus, or tropical juice blends, new world white wines are likely to give you the most pleasure in your glass.

Next week which white wines will suit you.

## BEST BUYS

- 1991 Château de Tracy, Pouilly-Fumé, Adnams, The Crown, High Street, Southwold, Suffolk, half bottle £4.95 delivered; Halves, Wood Yard, off Corve Street, Ludlow, Shropshire, and at The Wine Treasury, 899-901 Fulham Road, London SW6, £5.89.
- Manure, greenage and grass cuttings-styled top notch Loire white; may not suit all.
- 1988 Château Quatre Cabons, Majestic Wine Warehouses, down 50p to £2.99 until Feb 21.
- A dash of the merlot grape make this rustic, plummy, winter red a winner.
- Chilean Cabernet Sauvignon St Emiliano, Gateway, £3.35.
- Plenty of rich, cassis fruit and a keen price.
- Cape View Cinsault-Shiraz, The Victoria Wine Company, £3.39.
- Robust, chunky red from South Africa with extra Antipodian class by the New Zealand wine maker Kym Milne.
- 1992 Vega de Moris Valdepenas, Oddbins, £2.79.
- A brilliant crimson hue backed up by vibrant, zesty fruit put this Spanish red ahead of the under-£3 Iberian pack.



Choosing the right wine is an art that is made easier if you understand your own palate

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## A treat in Chinatown

How to choose the best dim sum for the Chinese New Year

Dim sum, which translates literally as "touch of the heart", are little snacks designed to satisfy hunger pangs between meals. Originating from the Canton region, they were traditionally served mid-morning and afternoon at tea-houses, though nowadays they are more commonly the main midday meal. In Chinese restaurants in Britain they tend to be served from 11am to 5pm.

The best time to try dim sum is on a Sunday when Chinese families traditionally go out to lunch. You need to be prepared to queue for the more popular restaurants and may even have to get a ticket to establish your place. The larger the party the better, as you can try more dishes.

On the menu you'll find the familiar as well as the exotic - deep fried snacks like won tons and spring rolls and steamed specialties such as pork dumplings (*siu mai*), prawn dumplings (*har kau*) and steamed spare ribs (*gai gwa*), which are particularly popular among the Chinese.

For atmosphere in London go for one of the more traditional restaurants like New World or Cheung Cheng Ku with their cavernous rooms where waitresses wheel the dim sum on trolleys. Ordering is a hit-and-miss affair with trolleys appearing apparently at random. (Sweet things arrive with savoury, which can be disconcerting. The Chinese are happy to eat the two together.)

At New World, which is highly rated by the Chinese, I had the best and worst of dishes. On the credit side were feather light steamed spring onion buns stuffed with delicately spicy minced pork and gloriously smoky deep-fried stuffed aubergines. On the debit side unpleasantly gluey deep-fried fish balls served with what looked like a sauce of salad cream (it was).

Even though the menu is in English as well as Chinese, it still helps to know the ropes. You need to order all the



Getting steamed up over dim sum at the New World restaurant in Chinatown, London

steamed dishes you might want straight away," says Ken Lee of Harbour City, one of the more customer-friendly restaurants in Chinatown. "It takes longer for the kitchen to produce a steamed dish."

As helpings in most restaurants are generous (a single dim sum dish will generally contain three or four portions) Mr Lee advises ordering no more than three dishes each for a party of six, two each for eight people or more. The balance should be in favour of steamed dishes (lighter and more digestible). Most Chinese would include a portion of cheung fun, a steamed rice pancake stuffed with pork, prawns or vegetables. Cheung fun, which should be light and delicate, is a good pointer to the overall quality of the dim sum (Harbour City's were exceptionally good).

Sauce is a question of etiquette. Although dipping sauces (generally soy, oyster or searingly hot chilli) may be supplied on the table, the Chinese do not generally dunk their dim sum in sauce unless it accompanies the dish. "All the seasoning should take place in the kitchen," says Chinese cookery writer Deh-

Ta Hsiung. "Sloshing everything with soy sauce destroys the true delicate taste."

Now and Zen is a hi-tech westernised Chinese restaurant which feels like dining in the atrium of a City bank. It's pricier than Chinatown (which doesn't make it expensive) but the dim sum are good and the kitchen doesn't use monosodium glutamate. It was also the only place I walked out of during my dim sum crawl without feeling overfed - largely because I'd stuck to the steamed variety.

If you can't get to Chinatown for the New Year, here is an authentic recipe for won tons from Ken Hom's *Taste of China*. (Papermac, £12.99).

- |                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| <b>Chengdu won tons</b>            |
| 1 packet of won ton skins          |
| <b>Filling</b>                     |
| 120g/350g minced pork              |
| 1 egg, beaten                      |
| 1tbsp sesame oil                   |
| 2tsp salt                          |
| 1tsp freshly ground black pepper   |
| 1tbsp finely chopped garlic        |
| 4tbsp finely chopped spring onions |
| 3tbsp dark soy sauce               |
| 1tbsp sugar                        |
| 1-3tsp chilli oil (to taste)       |

2tsp Chinese black vinegar  
1tsp freshly ground black pepper

**Garnish**  
1tbsp Sichuan peppercorns, roasted and ground

Combine the pork, egg, sesame oil, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Mix well. Using a teaspoon, put a small amount of the filling in the centre of each skin. Bring up the two sides, dampen the edges with a little water and pinch together to seal. Continue until you have used up all the filling or won ton skins.

In a large serving bowl, combine garlic, onions, soy sauce, sugar, chilli oil, vinegar and pepper. Stir to mix well. Bring large pot of water to the boil. Put in won tons and simmer for four minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon to the serving bowl. Mix gently with sauce, garnish with peppercorns and serve at once.

FIONA BECKETT

The following restaurants are in London's Chinatown: New World, 1 Gerrard Place (071-734 0390), Harbour City, 46 Gerrard Street, (439 7859), Cheung Cheng Ku, 17 Wardour Street, (437 1288). Now and Zen is at 4a Upper St Martin's Lane (447 0376).



# Toss a salad high for a lucky year

DIANA LEADBETTER

If I were in Hong Kong now, I'd be shopping with my sister-in-law in Wanchai market for special food for the lunar New Year, the Year of the Dog, which falls on February 10. At home, instead of doing my usual round of the Chinese stores in Soho, I decided to do a one-stop shop at Wing Yip, the only Chinese supermarket chain in the country. It is the best place to stock up on all dry goods: rice, spices and spice mixtures, noodles, bean curd in all shapes and forms, seasonings, such as dark and light soy sauce (good value at 53p for 600ml), pure roasted sesame oil, chilli sauces, pickles, such as cucumber in soy sauce from Taipei (£1.25 for 375g), sliced ginger (50p for 400g), satay paste, fish sauce, the crushed brown and black bean sauces, and preserved bean curd (£1.50 for a large jar).

A glass-fronted cabinet contains the treasures of Chinese cookery, highly prized — and priced — ingredients, such as shark's fin, bird's nest, abalone (£28.50 for a 425g can), "con poy", or dried scallops, (£44.50 for 1lb), "flower" mushrooms, which are dried shiitake, the finest at £15.50 for 8oz and less beautiful ones for £5.05 for the same quantity, and "fat choy", or sea moss, £1.35 for 30g. Freshly roasted duck for £10 each was available the day I went, as were a whole array of cakes, pastries and special puddings for the New Year. You could order in advance an airy sponge, coloured and flavoured with pandanus leaves. I also bought preserved kumquats (£1.05 for 7oz) to cook with quails, as this is a traditional New Year fruit.

Chinese New Year is the time for enjoying "yee sang", a unique combination of thinly sliced raw fish, shredded raw vegetables, pig's trotter, plum sauce, spices, fragrant sesame oil and crisp toppings, such as nuts, fried onions, sea moss and deep-fried "seaweed", which is usually made of finely shredded spring greens. It is traditionally eaten by the Chinese on the seventh day of the lunar New Year to celebrate the universal birthday of mankind. Tossing the salad high will ensure good fortune and prosperity in the coming year. Here the first of the wild salmon is just becoming available, at a price, and is a suitably costly ingredient to use for this celebration dish.

I have chosen dishes today that I have developed over the years during extended visits to the Far East, when I have been lucky enough to spend time in both domestic and professional kitchens. Together they make a Western-style meal of oriental flavours to herald the Year of the Dog.

**Frances Bissell shops at a Chinese supermarket for food to celebrate the lunar New Year**



**The TIMES COOK**

**Winter bean curd soup (serves 6)**  
4oz/110g pork tenderloin  
4oz/110g chicken breast  
1 shallot, peeled and thinly sliced  
1 tsp groundnut oil  
2½/1.15 chicken or vegetable stock  
6oz/170g broccoli florets  
1 tsp cornflour  
1 packet bean curd or firm tofu, 6-8oz/170-230g  
1 tsp coriander leaves  
1 free-range egg yolk, lightly beaten



On the meat into narrow, ¼ in/5mm-wide strips and fry with the shallot in the groundnut oil for five minutes over a moderate heat, stirring to stop the ingredients burning.

Pour on the chicken or vegetable stock, bring to the boil, and simmer for five minutes more. Add the broccoli florets and simmer for two to three minutes.

Mix the cornflour to a smooth paste with a little cold water, and stir into the soup.

Cook it for a further minute or two before adding the bean curd, cut into small squares, and the coriander.

Bring the soup to simmering point, and stir in the egg yolk until it sets in threads. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve.

For those who like hot and spicy soup, a chilli or two could be shredded into it a few minutes before serving.

## Shrimp-stuffed mushrooms

This mixture can also be used to stuff squares of hollowed out beancurd, parboiled courgettes or small hollowed-out potatoes, which have been cooked until just tender. A mixture of shiitake, oyster and ordinary cap mushrooms will do if you cannot get dried Chinese mushrooms, but the dish will not have the same intensity of flavour. If you do use the latter, they should be soaked for 30 minutes, rinsed, and then simmered for 15 minutes in stock, wine or water. Only raw prawns should be used. If frozen, defrost before using.

(serves 4 to 6 as a starter)

18 dried Chinese mushrooms, about 1½ in/4cm in diameter  
2 tsp cornflour  
1lb/455g raw prawns, shelled  
1 free-range egg white  
large pinch salt  
small pinch pepper  
finely grated ginger and chopped chives, garlic chives, or spring onion, plus extra for garnish

Prepare the dried mushrooms as described above. If using fresh mushrooms, discard the stalks, and wipe the caps clean. Avoid washing them if possible. Sprinkle cornflour lightly over the inside of each mushroom cap, which helps stick the stuffing to it. Put the shelled prawns, most of the egg white, the remaining cornflour, the salt, pepper, ginger and chives in a food processor and process, or chop with two heavy cleavers, until you have a smooth paste. Spoon the filling into each mushroom cap, and smooth it over with a finger or thumb dipped into the egg white. Place in a steamer basket, and steam for eight minutes. Remove and garnish before serving.

## Fried quails with kumquats and deep-fried mint

(serves 6)

6 oven-ready quails, boned or not, as you prefer  
salt and pepper  
12 kumquats, fresh or dried  
2 star anise pods  
1 tsp soy sauce  
2 tsp rice wine  
1 tsp clear honey  
good pinch of ground Sichuan pepper  
about 18 fl oz/500ml groundnut oil for frying  
bunch of fresh mint, rinsed and thoroughly dried, and each leaf or sprig separated

Lightly season the quails, and put a kumquat in each cavity. Put the quails in a shallow dish with the star anise. Mix the soy sauce, rice wine, honey and pepper, and pour it over the quails, turning them so that they are well covered with the marinade. Cover and refrigerate for at least three hours, or over-



night if this is more convenient.

Gently heat a wok and pour in the oil. Remove the quails from the marinade and let any liquid drip back into the dish. Pat them dry. When the oil is hot, put in the quails, and fry them, turning them from time to time for about 12 to 15 minutes until, when pierced with a skewer, the juices run clear. Remove them from the oil, drain them on kitchen paper, put on a serving plate, and keep warm.

Reheat the oil and fry the mint leaves in batches, if necessary, until they are dark green, crisp and transparent. The oil should be hotter than for the quails, since the leaves are only going to be in it for 30 seconds or so. Take out the mint leaves with a slotted spoon. Pour the oil away, or strain it for re-use. Reheat the wok, and add four tablespoons of water. When it has nearly evaporated, add any remaining marinade, or an extra

splash of rice wine and soy sauce. Swirl around the pan, and pour over the quails. Garnish with fried mint leaves and the remaining kumquats, sliced if you wish. Basil leaves can be fried instead of mint. Serve with a cucumber salad, green salad or steamed green vegetables and rice.

## Almond beancurd with flower-tea syrup

This delicate dessert is not made from beancurd, but resembles it in texture, and is not unlike Turkish delight. The syrup can be made in advance as it keeps well.

(serves 6)

for the syrup:  
1 tsp jasmine or rose congeal tea with plenty of flowers in it  
10 fl oz/280ml water  
6oz/170g sugar  
2 tsp lychee liqueur (optional)

Pour boiling water over the tea

leaves, and infuse for 15 to 20 minutes. Strain into a saucepan, stir in the sugar, and when it has melted, boil the syrup for two to three minutes. Allow it to cool, and stir in the liqueur.

## for the "beancurd":

8oz/230g whole almonds, blanched  
4 sheets gelatine  
2-3oz/85g sugar  
few drops pure almond essence  
few drops almond oil

Grind the almonds to a paste, and transfer it to a bowl. Pour over 10 fl oz/280ml boiling water and let stand overnight. (Alternatively, put the almonds and hot water in a food processor and blend.)

The next day, soften the gelatine in 5 fl oz/140ml water. Put the sugar and a further 5 fl oz/140ml water in a saucepan and stir until the sugar has dissolved.

Stir in the softened gelatine and

water, and continue stirring until the gelatine has completely dissolved. Line a fine sieve with muslin or a jelly bag, and pour in the almond mixture. Squeeze as much milky liquid out of the nuts as possible, and mix it with the sweetened gelatine mixture. Add the almond essence.

Use almond oil to oil a clean shallow cake tin or baking tray, and pour in the mixture. Chill in the refrigerator until set. Cut into lozenges or other shapes, and serve in shallow glass bowls or plates, with a little syrup.

Wing Yip, 395 Edgware Road, Crickwood, London NW2 6LN (081-450 0422). For details of stores in Birmingham and Manchester, phone head office on 021-327 3838.

Frances Bissell's Oriental Flavours (An English cook travels Eastward) will be re-issued next month by Pavilion Books Limited in hardback (£12.99). It is also available in Macmillan PaperMac (£10.99).

minatown

I AM never quite sure which came first: my love of food or my love of food as a subject for my art. So many of my lithographs, etchings and drawings are of food and drink and of people eating and drinking in restaurants and cafes. Whichever it is, I am lucky that there is such a great overlap between work and pleasure. I have a studio with my printing press next to the kitchen, but my dining-table is where I do my still-life drawings.

When we invite people for lunch or dinner to our house in London, just south of the river, I often like to draw what we are going to eat in the same way that some people keep a diary. My fishmonger is no longer surprised when I ask him to leave the fish heads on, because they look more attractive that way. They will probably be drawn or painted before being eaten.

My husband, Tristram, and I do not have grand dinner parties. We prefer to ring up our family or a friend or two the day before and invite them for supper, which we eat at the dining-table in our basement kitchen. It has been the hub of family life and the focal point for entertaining since we moved here 25 years ago.

There always seems to be a lot of food around the house. Although it is there partly for professional reasons, it is as much to do with the fact that both Tristram and I like cooking and eating. I enjoy rustling up lunch for a friend or dinner for four at the last minute from whatever happens to be in the fridge or store cupboard — mainly cold starters such as lentil salads,

## ENTERTAINING AT HOME

Virginia Powell

## Sketching the menu



Virginia Powell at the dining table, "the hub of family life"

mushroom and courgette concoctions and pasta sauces, all laid out in dishes and bowls acquired on holidays abroad. And, of course, the contents of the fridge or store cupboard are often dictated by the work I am involved in at the time.

Recently, I have been doing a lot of work for *Convivium*, the food-lovers' quarterly journal published by David Wheeler, who publishes

*Hortus* for gardeners. For the third issue, I did a series of drawings to illustrate Arabella Boxer's articles on fish smokers around the country.

Tristram is an excellent cook, and his work as a television drama director has an indirect influence over what might appear on the table. If he can find the time when he is away filming, he

loves nipping along to local markets. He is good at Chinese and Indian dishes. If he is not cooking, his great relaxation is reading cookery books.

I am appallingly punctual and always ready well in advance if we are entertaining. It means that there is time to combine my two passions of drawing and cooking. Tristram and I never compete at the stove. If he is in charge of the meal, I am quite happy sitting there drawing him cooking whatever it is we are all going to eat later.

**Virginia Powell's lentil salad (small starter for four people)**  
4oz/110g green lentils  
1 bay leaf  
½ medium-sized onion  
1 clove garlic  
water to cover

**Dressing**  
juice of ½ lemon  
2 tsp extra virgin olive oil  
chopped onion  
handful chopped parsley  
diced rasher of bacon

Bring lentils to boil in saucepan with water, bay leaf, onion and garlic. Simmer gently for 1-1½ hours until soft, topping up with more water if necessary. When ready remove from stove, drain, remove onion, garlic and bay leaf. Pour lentils into serving dish and mix in lemon juice, olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle with chopped onion, parsley and fried bacon, if wanted. Eat when cool.

Interview by Alasdair Riley

Virginia Powell's work can be seen at Salisbury Playhouse Gallery from February 17 to March 19.

## DISH OF THE DAY

Chef: Richard Neat, 27. Born: Farnham, Surrey. Restaurant: Pied-à-terre, 34 Charlotte Street, London W1 (071-636 1178).

Present: Celebrating his second anniversary in the restaurant, where his cooking gained a first Michelin star after only one year.

Past: Worked at Pennyhill Park, Bagshot, Surrey, while still at school. Later, took a catering course at Westminster College; then worked at the Savoy, Manor de Quai, Saisons, Jamin in Paris, and Harvey's, Wandsworth, southwest London.

Future: "I did not work two years with Raymond Blanc and two with Joël Robuchon in Paris just to run an OK restaurant. The ultimate goal has to be more Michelin stars."

Personal: "I work 11 shifts a week but still managed to visit 11 different countries last year. I enjoy travel and doing a lot of photography."

Dish: Fillets of John Dory with a sardine vinaigrette and pommes soufflées — a popular introduction to the £38 dinner menu.

R.Y.

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## RHINE JOURNEY

Visiting: Cologne - Linz - Rudesheim - Mainz - Gernsheim - Strasbourg - Basel  
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Here is an ideal opportunity to take advantage of a special low price that we have negotiated with KD Lines, the owners of the finest Rhine river vessels.

Our journey begins in the attractive city of Cologne where we will stay overnight at the city's most famous hotel, the five Star Dom Hotel. There will be ample time to see the main attractions including the magnificent Cathedral and some of the fine museums and art galleries.

From Cologne we shall sail south all the way to the city of Basel. The spectacular route passes medieval castles, vineyards, historic towns and the legendary Lorelei Rock. After the magnificent stretch south of Koblenz the river twists and turns past steep hillsides covered with vineyards and you come to the wonderful old city of Strasbourg.

## THE ITINERARY

**DAY 1** Fly London (Heathrow) to Cologne by scheduled flight. Drive to the Dom Hotel for an overnight stay. Afternoon at leisure.

**DAY 2** Explore the city including the Cathedral, the largest in Germany. Next to the Cathedral is the excellent Roman-Germanic Museum built over a 3rd century Roman mosaic. Do not miss a stroll around Domplatz very much the hub of the city. Embark in the afternoon and sail during the night to Linz.

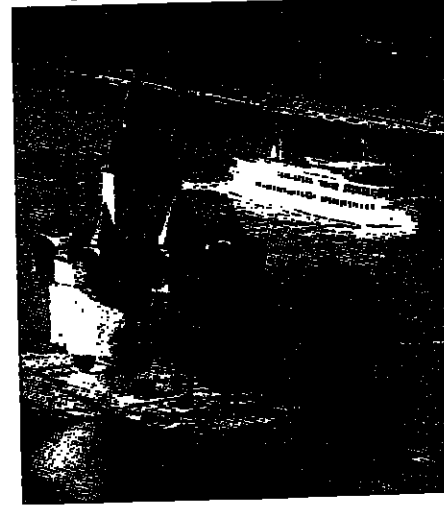
**DAY 3** Linz. Colourfully painted half timbered houses make Linz one of the prettiest towns on the Rhine. Later visit Rudesheim which is situated at the southern end of the Rhine Gorge. It is a lovely old wine town surrounded by famous vineyards. Moor overnight in Rudesheim.

**DAY 4** Mainz. Spend the morning in Mainz, set at the confluence of the Rhine and Main rivers. The city has been an important centre since Roman times and is perhaps best known for its famous printing inventor, Johannes Gutenberg. Sail during lunch to Gernsheim. An optional afternoon excursion is available from here to the delightful city of Heidelberg. Passengers who join this excursion rejoin the vessel at Mannheim at 19.00 hours. Moor overnight at Mannheim.

**DAY 5** Morning cruising along the Rhine. In the afternoon arrive at the enchanting French city of Strasbourg. See the Minster and the Old Quarter, Quai de la Petite France and the covered bridges. Moor overnight and sail at first light.

**DAY 6** Morning relaxing as we sail along this attractive section of the river. After lunch arrive in Basel. Disembark and drive to the Hilton hotel for an overnight stay.

**DAY 7** Morning at leisure until departure by first class rail to Zurich Airport for the scheduled flight to London (Heathrow).



Continuing in a southerly direction we pass the Rhine plain on one side and the Black Forest on the other as the KD vessel approaches Basel, nestling in the foothills of the Alps.

Depending on the departure date selected, the journey will be aboard the MS Britannia or Deuteland. Both vessels are the pride of the KD Rhine fleet and offer very comfortable accommodation in all outside cabins with shower and toilet. Facilities aboard include observation lounge, reading room, sun deck with canopy, bar, heated outdoor swimming pool, sauna, solarium and gift shop.

But perhaps KD is most famous for its cuisine. Sumptuous meals are provided throughout the cruise including a full à la carte breakfast, five course lunch, afternoon tea and pastries, six course gourmet dinner. One night's bed and breakfast accommodation in the Five Star Dom Hotel, Cologne. One night's bed and breakfast accommodation in the First Class Hilton Hotel, Basel. First class rail from Basel to Zurich airport. Transfers as stated.

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7 May, 1 June	£795	£980
18 June to 24 September*	£895	£995

\*Departures over weekends between 18 June to 24 September.  
Single supplement: Add 25% to Category B prices (Provision: double cabin for sole occupancy).  
Regional flight supplement: Birmingham £70 per person. Manchester £80 per person.

Price subject to exchange.  
Price includes: Economy class scheduled air travel between London and Cologne and from Zurich to London. Full board accommodation on KD ship for 4 nights with a la carte breakfast, five course lunch, afternoon tea and pastries, six course gourmet dinner. One night's bed and breakfast accommodation in the Five Star Dom Hotel, Cologne. One night's bed and breakfast accommodation in the First Class Hilton Hotel, Basel. First class rail from Basel to Zurich airport. Transfers as stated.  
Not included: Travel insurance - from £25, tips to crew.

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## Barbara Cartland confesses her sins and celebrates her saving graces

### VICES & VIRTUES

**Wrath:** Women's Lib makes me angry. It has demasculinised men. Men are not half so strong and positive as they were when I was young. A woman's job is to look after the home. The Greeks believed that when God made man he was alone. God then cut him in half and the soft, sweet, spiritual side went to the woman and the masculine, fighting side went to the man. Women should look after the men and make love, something spiritual rather than just physical.

**Pride:** Although I've never lived in Scotland, I'm terribly proud of being a Scot. I am a direct descendant of Robert the Bruce, King of Scotland.

**Avarice:** I've had to work for money all my life. My grandfather was a financier and built up the city of Birmingham. But he lost all his money and shot himself. We were left with very little money. My father then had to work very hard. I had my first proposal of marriage when I was 16 (I'm very proud of that) and I started to work on the Express. While there, I wrote a book which was an enormous success. It went to eight editions and was published in five languages.

**Lust:** Romance is what I've always tried for. Last year I said I wanted to bring back morality, which is what Margaret Thatcher tried to do. But now I'm trying to make people realise they want real love, which is not this awful sex, you see.

**Envy:** I don't envy anybody. I'm perfectly happy pushing along in my own way. I've had to work very hard for my success.

**Sloth:** I write 6-7,000 words every day, except for Wednesdays, when I go to London. I'm starting a new book tomorrow. I start about midday and finish about 2pm. I dictate it all.

**Gnuttony:** This comes when people overeat of the wrong things. I believe in alternative medicine. All over the world people write to me about health. I'm not at all gnutinous. I eat sensibly and take a large amount of vitamins and I'm 92.

**Faith:** When I want a plot, I say a prayer, and God gives me a plot in 12 hours. Yesterday it was a bit close, and suddenly a voice said: "The Panama Canal". I know nothing about the canal. But it will be the most fascinating story I've ever written.

**Prudence:** I am careful, particularly with what I write. I think this new thing of people talking about sex all the time is appalling. It's very bad for the children. The sex that we get in the papers — "How to Make Love", as if people didn't know — is appalling. It's bad for the young people to see that nonsense.

**Fortitude:** You have to go on fighting for what you want. It's frightening what's happening in this country. We've got to get people back to realise they should love each other. The English are very bad. They're not very neighbourly. The Scots are, and a friend of mine went to Edinburgh and said he couldn't believe the people were so nice, so friendly. We are bad mannered, we do not help people. When my secretaries go shopping they tell me how rude people are.

**Justice:** I feel strongly about Gypsies. After three years of bitter fighting, I have my own camp of Romany Gypsies here in Hertfordshire. They behave very well. The children go to school neat and tidy and look on education as a privilege.

**Hope:** I always hope that things will get better. It keeps people going. It's important. My books always give people hope — you've got to go on fighting.

**Charity:** Charities write to me all the time, every church in England must be falling down. I do what I can, otherwise I send them books, and they can make money on those. You can't give money. That rubbish about me having millions is not true.

**Temperance:** I do not drink at all when I'm working. I occasionally have a drink at the weekend. I'm frightfully keen on Metaxa brandy, which I drink with ginger ale. It's good for you.

Interview by Edward Marriot



# Worship in the old-fashioned way



As used to be common in the Roman Catholic Church, most of the Mass was celebrated with the priest's back to his congregation

## Ruth Gledhill had to remember her Latin when visiting the Old Roman Catholics



THE congregation of former Anglicans, Methodists and Roman Catholics crossed themselves devoutly as the priest intoned: "In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen."

Fr Ronald Steptoe, of the Old Roman Catholic Church, and his two servers, Charles Tarelli and Commander Leslie Halliburton, faced the altar. As used to be common throughout the Roman Catholic Church, almost the entire Mass was celebrated with the priest's back to us and his servers on either side.

Fr Steptoe began his life of faith as a Roman Catholic, became a lay assistant in an Anglican parish church and four years ago was ordained an Old Roman Catholic priest by Archbishop Frederick Linalde, of the diocese of Caerglow (the only Old Roman Catholic diocese in the United Kingdom), and spiritual head of the church in the British Isles. Archbishop Linalde said: "Most of the people who come to us are either dissident Roman Catholics who do not like the modern ways or dissident Angli-

cans who are worried about the ordination of women. We are very old-fashioned."

The Old Catholic Church has its roots in the mid-18th century when Pope Clement XI declared four successive episcopal consecrations in Utrecht to be valid but unlawful, because his permission had not been obtained. When Pope Pius IX re-established the Dutch hierarchy in 1853, he ignored the existing Archbishop of Utrecht who, with his flock, became known as the "Old Catholics".

The church received an impetus in 1871 from German and Swiss theologians who refused to accept the decision of the first Vatican Council in 1870 that the Pope is infallible when speaking ex cathedra on questions of faith and morals. In the 1920s, to emphasise the historical links with the Holy See of Rome, the adjective "Roman" was added by dioceses in the United States and Britain.

Although Old Roman Catholics are not in communion with the

Roman Catholic Church, Rome considers their priesthood and therefore their sacraments to be valid. This contrasts with the Vatican's view of Anglican orders, which in an Apostolic letter of 1896 are described as "utterly null and totally void".

I was glad to have dressed warmly. The stone of the walls, beneath a stout wooden roof supported by beams as thick as tree trunks, seemed almost to breathe with the cold of centuries. The glowing gas heaters barely took the chill off, but a positive effect of the icy air was that the clouds of incense emanating from the censer smelled pleasant but not overpowering.

Salmestone Grange was built in 1250, a Benedictine foundation which served as an outpost of a monastery in Canterbury, but there was a religious site here before the Danes set foot in Britain. Small, exquisite statues of the Virgin Mary stood in the deep-set window alcoves, lit by many candles. There were traces of an angel's head and wings marked in the ancient plaster, and a colourful west window depicted the creation, paradise and the fall.

The chapel somehow escaped suppression under Henry VIII, and Mass continued to be said in the crypt, but the demands of farming life succeeded where the Reformation had failed and some time in the 19th century it was turned into a barn. In the 1930s it was bought and restored for use as a private chapel by a Major Hatfield, commemorated by a plaque on the wall. The chapel is now in the hands of William Whelan, owner of the grange, who has encouraged a return to the religious practices and rites as they were until the Vatican reforms of this century.

The congregants were mostly middle-aged and elderly and dressed in warm woollen suits and coats. They carried ancient, worn copies of the old missal, with the Tridentine Mass in Latin, as celebrated by Roman Catholics until the Second Vatican Council. The Gloria was sung, with the help of a recording of French monks. Their disembodied voices seemed ethereal, echoes from the past, and many

Old Roman Catholic Church, the Chapel of Our Lady at Salmestone, Salmestone Grange, Nash Road, Margate, Kent CT9 4BX (0843 834985).

CHAPLAIN: Fr Ronald Steptoe.

ARCHITECTURE: Chapel built in 1325 for Salmestone Grange, a monastic foundation. Remarkable stained-glass windows.\*\*\*

SERMON: None.

MUSIC: Missa de Angelis, dating from 15-16th century, sung by French monastic choir and rendered to us by tape.\*\*\*

LITURGY: Tridentine rite, in Latin, as formulated by the Council of Trent. This is the Mass which Roman Catholics would have heard before the reforms of the Second Vatican Council.\*\*\*

AFTER-SERVICE CARE: A taste of near-monastic asceticism was inescapable as we sipped our coffee.\*\*\*

SPIRITUAL HIGH: Extraordinary sensation of stepping back in time while remaining at the height of spiritual fashion.\*\*\*

\* stars are awarded to a maximum of five

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THE TIMES

AT 30P IT'S A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR A GREAT NEWSPAPER

5/5 Pleasure ratings are awarded to a maximum of five. Column centimetres indicate the length of reviews to date in national broadsheet newspapers.

4/5 **Maddened crowd:** The President of the Immortals has been having plenty of sport with Martin Seymour-Smith, author of a new 900-page biography, *Hardy* (Bloomsbury, £25). This is mainly because the author has so much sport with Hardy's earlier biographers, Robert Gittings and Michael Millgate, and with Hardy's second wife, Florence Dugdale.

"Facetious... fatuous," thundered Anthony Thwaite in *The Sunday Telegraph*. "Gittings and Millgate rouse him to almost incessant contempt, abuse and innuendo. He writes as if no-one before had ever read Hardy warmly." "He nips, growls and savages the other biographers on page after page," added Claire Tomalin in *The Independent on Sunday*. "You get quite a surprise when you turn back to them and find that their portraits are after all affectionate and admiring." She, like most of the reviewers, also made the point that there was "not a shred of evidence" for Seymour-Smith's excited claim that Florence Dugdale had masturbated one of her employers to get an inheritance.

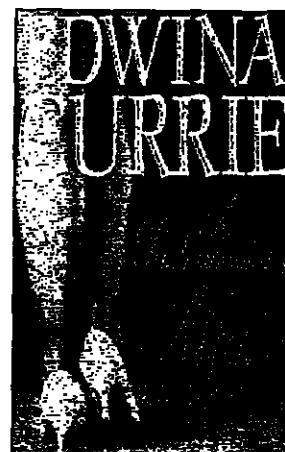
Andrew Motion in *The Observer* said of the book: "It is windy about the novels and neglectful of the poems." In *The Spectator*, however, James Buchan took a more generous view: it was "full of learning and sometimes flashing with insight, defensive, partisan, a little doty". In *The Daily Telegraph* Nicholas Shakespeare said it was "an ambitious, sprawling, head-like book" which made "several important adjustments to our image of the man" and was "full of macabre and satisfying incidents", like the story that Hardy's heart was placed in a biscuit tin after his death and was eaten by his cat. In *The Sunday Times*, John Carey concluded that "without the passionate engagement that betrays him into his indiscretions, the vitality of this remarkable biography might have been lost as well."

Col cms: 355

## What the papers said: Derwent May's bookbuyers' guide

3/5 **The vindaloo line:** It was fellow-MPs rather than presidents who had sport with Edwina Currie's novel *A Parliamentary Affair* (Hodder, £15.99). Julian Crichtley in *The Daily Telegraph* described it as "564 pages in which Elaine Stalkor MP (the author in a blonde wig) is repeatedly pleased by a Government Whip, not in order to persuade her to vote at 10 o'clock or to discover her views on Maas-tricht, but for the sheer hell of it." It was "quite unsuitable for Suffolk Woman," he thought, perhaps rather naively, but would "doubtless be read by Essex Man". Unfortunately it was "entirely without humour", even though "sex was God's joke upon the world" — Edwina, please note. In *The Times*, Gerald Kaufman compared the book with Michael Dobbs' new novel, *The Touch of Innocence* (already covered in this column). He found Currie's novel "much better value for money — if, that is, value for money is defined as the proportion of sexual episodes per chapter" — but he thought that both books were "on the whole, unutterable rubbish".

The most fun was had by Helen Fielding in *The Sunday Times*. The novel introduced, she reported, "the literary debut of the sneering bottom (Miranda swept away, outlining a full bottom which sneered at him...". Once you might have been disbelieving when you read this, she said, but after the scandals of the last few weeks "you find yourself looking at real bottoms, thinking, well, you know, maybe they can sneer". She liked the "high-spirited tone", but thought that "even in a bonkbuster you need to feel sure of the morality — here you don't know where the author stands." She hoped the book would not start off "a sinister new trend" — such as



"A Ministerial Affair by Baroness Thatcher, featuring a minister who sneers her lover with mandarin oranges and custard, while discussing what a prat John Major is."

Col cms: 101

2/5 **Wesleyan wiles:** Age did not protect Mary Wesley from some fierce criticisms of her new novel, *An Imaginative Experience* (Bantam, £14.99). It is the story of a sad publisher and a lonely cleaning woman and how they discover each other, and Jane Shilling in *The Sunday Telegraph* found it "bitterly disappointing", with "an unsavoury and most uncharacteristic sanctimoniousness". In *The Times*, the young novelist Rachel Cusk detected "few traces of her much lauded charm, guile and intelligence".

But in *The Observer* Maureen Freely enjoyed each "bright amusing episode" with its "undercurrents of suppressed emotion", while James Walton in *The Daily Telegraph* stayed wholly loyal: "To pick out individual faults in individual Mary Wesley books is to miss the point... Why doesn't she change her act? The answer is obvious: because it works perfectly the way it is."

Col cms: 192

3/5 **There's the snub:** The historians were out in force to review Adam Sisman's biography of A.J.P. Taylor (Simon & Schuster, £18.99). His old rival, Hugh Trevor-Roper, was tolerably generous in *The Sunday Telegraph*: he thought Taylor was "a mercurial and perverse spirit" who "wrote plenty of rubbish for the popular press", but he acknowledged that Taylor's best historical writing was "delightful to read: exact, acute and stimulating". As for the biography, he found that "first-class" and "wonderfully fair". In *The Guardian*, Churchill's biographer, Martin Gilbert reminded readers more sternly that Taylor said, "In history, I am committed to truth. In politics, I would lie to whatever extent is necessary" — but he thought Sisman had succeeded in presenting him in "all his moods and stances".

In *The Spectator*, Raymond Carr wondered if "Taylor's unremitting industry was the refuge of an insecure, unhappy man", and evoked Taylor's "disastrous marital history" — his first wife "relentlessly pursued an outrageously attractive pupil of Taylor's", then "wasted her private fortune on financing Dylan Thomas". In *The Mail on Sunday*, Jeremy Paxman recalled that Taylor had never been made a professor at Oxford — "a snub that hurt", he said sympathetically.

In *The Daily Mail*, Niall Ferguson made the unkind remark about both Sisman and his subject: he reminded us that Taylor himself once said: "We historians are dull creatures." Col cms: 331

3/5 **Hunting Hannibal:** David Canter is the psychology professor who drew up a "profile" of the London "Railway Rapist" in 1986, and helped the police to track him down. His book *Criminal Shadows* (HarperCollins, £16.99) describes the "shadows" that he thinks a serial killer always leaves behind him. Simon Wessely, a psychiatry lecturer writing in *The Times*, was not convinced by it, but found it "highly readable"; Joan Smith in *The Independent on Sunday* thought it was a book "likely to save lives". Col cms: 107

Music of the Romantic



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Gavin Rookledge surrounded by his work at his bookbinding workshop in a converted dairy in Gipsy Hill, southeast London — "It is very important to me that my books are used"

"What is the use of a book," thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?" The answer to Lewis Carroll's poser, according to bookbinder Gavin Rookledge, is a book which is a work of art in itself. "My books are totally different from anything in the shops," he says. "They are distinguished by a Gothic solidity, a chunkiness, with hands-on appeal."

Mr Rookledge's works, marketed as Rook's Books, are typically bound in leather, with metal or wooden details and hand-marbled endpapers. Even the more straightforward of his designs are fairly unusual — thick leather spines with bronze ram's-head bolts and copper rivets.

Even more unusual than his bookbindings is that Mr Rookledge, 29, is largely self-taught. He studied fine art and theatre studies at Brighton Polytechnic, where he was inspired by his tutor, Faith Shannon, who advocated thinking creatively about bookbinding. He then took a post-graduate course in art and outdoor education at Exeter University.

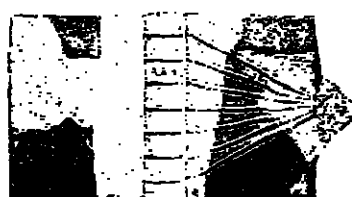
An enterprise allowance grant enabled him to set up a London workshop when he left college, while a three-month bookbinding residency

at the West Dorset hospital and three junior schools in Dorset, partly funded by South West Arts, gave him the confidence to develop his skills.

Now he works in a co-operative workshop shared with 16 artists in Gipsy Hill, southeast London. Much of his work comes by word-of-mouth or through commissions picked up at trade events such as the annual Chelsea Crafts Fair, through solo or joint exhibitions and through artistic residencies in museums and libraries in Britain and abroad.

"I start with skins, already tanned and cured, and high-quality papers, which I tend to buy in. I can make my own paper but it is a labour-intensive process," he says. "I use only skins of animals killed commercially for food, such as sheep, pig and cow. I won't use crocodile, ostrich or snake." Gen-

## Bound to please the bibliophiles



Visitors' book covered in dyed leathers, about £140

erally the skins are pre-dyed, but sometimes I'll distress them to give them character. I use a lot of acid-free Italian papers with rag content rather than wood pulp. Many papers made from wood disintegrate after about 80 years, partly because of the lignin. I work mainly with hand-tools and prefer using materials for the bindings which respond to a hands-

on approach, such as copper, bronze, wood, leather and suede. I don't do restoration work, although I will rebind favourite books, because it is important to me that my books are used. I hate to think of my work sitting on a shelf as a collector's item.

Any unusual commission is likely to interest Mr Rookledge. Requests have included presentation volumes for the Duke of Edinburgh and other royals, a box that looked like a book to house a video cassette (Sir Richard Attenborough's retirement present from the British Film Institute), Kermit the Frog-sized books for a Muppets movie trailer, a sex book covered with plaited leather thongs. He was once asked to bind a book in tattooed human skin (to be supplied by the client), but was relieved that the commission fell through.

Mr Rookledge also produces a selection of off-the-peg books, instantly recognisable by their pucker-edged covers and leather spines with a ragged, paired edge. These blank-page books may cost from £20 for a small notebook to £200 for a more elaborate visitors' book. A selection of diaries, notebooks, address books, visitors' books and photograph albums, commissioned by Oxford's Bodleian library, will go on sale in the library shop next year.

Although Mr Rookledge likes to think that all his books are functional and attractive, it is the one-offs which excite him. "I like making pieces into which I can put my own personality," he says.

Whether traditional or extraordinary, the work which pleases Mr Rookledge is given his personal sign: a tiny tooled rook on the spine.

NICOLE SWENGLEY

● Gavin Rookledge, Rook's Books, Gipsy Hill Workshop, 14 Paddock Gardens, London SE19 3SP (011-766 6398). For a free list of members who offer a bookbinding service, contact the British Printing Industries Federation, 11 Bedford Row, London WC2R 4DX (01-242 6904).

Young authors, page 12

THE TIMES OFFER OF YOUR FREE CD OR CASSETTE — THE BAROQUE, CLASSICAL, ROMANTIC AND MODERN PERIODS

## Music of the Romantics

For the uninitiated and those conditioned by Classic FM's Sunday morning offers of chocolate-box music, perhaps a word of warning is necessary before we go further. Forget any association of Romantic music with romance of the amorous variety. Romantic music can be about love, but that subject does not define it.

Broadly, Romanticism began as a reaction against the intellectualism and formalism of the Classical era in favour of nature, simplicity and directness. Literature was the first of the arts to embrace this new philosophy, and one of its prime movers was the 18th-century writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Music caught up, so to speak, with Beethoven, Schubert and Weber, all of whom, though defined properly as Classical composers, wrote works that signalled a new freedom of expression.

New intellectualism nor considerations of form were thrown out of the window once the Romantic era gained pace. Indeed the freer the imagination, the greater abundance of ideas, the more a piece of music demanded the reins of form. Anarchy has its limits.

Romantic music was a matter of response, perhaps to another piece of art, to a historical event, even to a particular place. One important form, the symphonic poem, cultivated by Liszt and Strauss, took the archetypal Classical structure and informed it specifically with a narrative taken from literature. Schumann's "Spring" Symphony and Wagner's opera (he called it a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or all-embracing art form) based on the old Celtic legend of Tristan and Isolde are other examples of internal responses to external things.

The emancipation of the composer from his status of glorified servant only helped music on its path in this new direction. The headstrong Beethoven wrote for himself, and after him music was never quite the same. No longer a

The works of ten composers of the Romantic period are featured on this week's free CD/cassette

commodity designed to serve the needs of nobility, church or state, it became a sacred artifact, something one could worship or strive to understand. Even so, some composers, particularly those who were also expert players of instruments, wrote music of less lofty ambition, designed explicitly for showing off.

As instruments developed, in an age in which their capabilities were continually



Tchaikovsky: "Pathétique"

stretched to and beyond their physical limits, so such composers would set interpreters ever more impossible technical challenges. These display pieces, often fairly empty, helped advance standards generally by making the goal of technical perfection ever harder to achieve. The violinist-composer Paganini was one of the better examples of composing in this way; his Caprices, formidable technical challenges, are rarely conquered. Liszt, meanwhile, managed to combine virtuosity with lofty aspirations.



Schumann: "Spring"

Schumann, Mendelssohn, Chopin and Berlioz are perhaps the main figures of the early Romantic period. Though born at around the same time as these composers, Liszt and Wagner lived long and their artistic maturities came relatively late. They are really among the middle Romantics, along with Bruckner, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Verdi, Dvořák, Mussorgsky and so on, some of whom adopted consciously nationalistic traits in their art.

The lives of some of the late Romantics stretch well into this century; among them one might name Mahler, Elgar, who died 60 years ago, Richard Strauss (died 1949), and even Jean Sibelius (died 1957). Brahms subscribed to one of two distinct lines of thought in Romantic music. Following Mendelssohn and Schumann, he took the old Classical forms — sonata structures and so on — and moulded them to suit his own purposes.

The leading figures of the other school, Berlioz, Liszt and Wagner, were freer in their structural thinking. Wagner, in *Tristan*, began to push the classical key system over the brink and into its free fall towards the atonality of Schoenberg and others. Yet late romantics, such as Strauss and the Russian pianist-composer Sergei Rachmaninov remained unswayed. As you will hear, Rachmaninov stayed faithful to archetypally Romantic gestures, lush melodies and rich, though fundamentally tonal, harmonies.

STEPHEN PETTITT

## This week's free CD

TODAY, and continuing over the next two weeks, *The Times*, in association with Conifer Records, is offering readers the opportunity to collect four free CDs or cassettes of great classical music on top quality record labels.

The recordings cover four periods of music — Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern — and offer an introduction to a music library that anyone would be proud to own.

In the past two weeks we have offered *Baroque Times* and *Classical Times* (if you missed them, see how to get copies below).

The free recording offered today, *Romantic Times*, covers the period from 1826-1900, and features the music of ten leading composers — Schumann, Chopin, Grieg, Paganini, Wagner, Brahms, Liszt, Tchaikovsky, Verdi and Rachmaninov (see right for details of the *Romantic Times* recording track listings).

The high-quality CD/cassette, produced by Delos, renowned for its superb sound, has a playing time of 70 minutes, 50 seconds.

HOW TO GET YOUR FREE CD/CASSETTE

● Collect two tokens from *The Times* (five will be printed next week, starting Monday, February 7), and fix them to the coupon below. When you have collected your two tokens, complete the coupon and send it to the address below, with a cheque for £1.98,



made payable to FREE MUSIC, to cover the cost of postage and packaging.

● Send your application to: *The Times Classical Collection*, PO Box 2002, Romford, Essex, RM3 8GQ. Specify whether you wish to receive *Romantic Times* in CD or cassette form. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

● If you missed Week 1 (*Baroque Times*) and/or Week 2 (*Classical Times*) of the collection, don't worry: to get one or both of these, send the coupon with £1.98 p.p. per CD/cassette (cheques made payable to FREE MUSIC).

● Readers have the option of collecting their free CD or cassette in person from the following centres on Friday, Feb 11, 10am-noon and 2-4pm: Global Video, 12-14 Moss Side Road, Shawlands, Glasgow, MFA Ltd, 10 Ashton Gate, Ashton Road, Romford, Essex, R&L, 5 Bishops Road, Cleve, Bristol, Fox Hayes, Solihull, Bank House, 150 Roundway Road, Leeds.

● Offer subject to availability.

NEXT WEEK: our fourth and final compilation, *Modern Times*.

### Romantic Times — track listing

THE *Romantic Times* CD/cassette has a total playing time of 70 minutes, 50 seconds.

1 Schumann: Symphony No 1, "Spring". Scherzo. Seattle Symphony conducted by Gerard Schwarz (6:12).  
2 Chopin: Cello Sonata, Op 65. Largo. Jian Wang, cello; Carol Rosenberger, piano (4:26).  
3 Schumann: *Waldmühen*. Arioso Auger, soprano; Dalton Baldwin, piano (2:21).  
4 Grieg: *Holberg Suite*. Air. Seattle Symphony conducted by Gerard Schwarz (6:15).  
5 Paganini: *Le Streghe*. Leonidas Kavakos, violin; Peter Nagy, piano (9:21).  
6 Wagner: *Tristan and Isolde*. Prelude Act III. Seattle Symphony conducted by Gerard Schwarz (6:45).  
7 Brahms: String Quintet No 2 in B major. Op. 111. Un poco Allegretto. Chamber Music Northwest (6:34).  
8 Liszt: Sonata 47 Del Perseus. John Browning, piano (6:40).  
9 Tchaikovsky: Symphony No 6 in B minor "Pathétique". Allegro molto vivace. Eugene Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra (9:41).  
10 Verdi: *La Forza del Destino*. "Pace, pace mio Dio". Alessandra Marc, soprano. New Zealand S.O. conducted by Heinz Wallberg (6:38).  
11 Rachmaninov: Etudes-Tableaux. Op. 39. No 5 in E flat major. John Browning, piano (8:47).

THE <del>1994</del> TIMES <i>Classical</i> COLLECTION		AFFIX ONE TOKEN HERE	
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### Saleroom guide

#### REVIEWS

□ So many dogs attended the dog paintings sale at Bonhams, Montpelier Street, Knightsbridge, London SW7 (071-584 9161), that it was hard to tell who was bidding: the owners or their best friends. Top lot at £33,000 was *Hot Pursuit*, which shows a dog race in which both competitors and audience are canine. Painted in the late 1800s by William Henry Hamilton Trood, this was bought within estimate by a private collector. An 1896 portrait by Lucy Waller of Dawdles, a mustard Dandie Dimont, doubled its estimate at £4,620.

□ Buyers seemed restricted by a £9,000 ceiling at the World of Drawings and Watercolours fair at the Park Lane Hotel, Piccadilly, London W1 (071-499 6321). Of the human subjects, Helen Allingham's painting *Donegal maid* sold for £7,800 at the Kay Michie stand, while the portrait *A Young Girl* by William Henry Hunt, went for £6,000. Heather Newman sold *A Pyrenean View*, by William Callow, for £6,900.

□ An "007" enthusiast spent £4,180 at Christie's, South Kensington, on a complete first edition set of Ian Fleming's James Bond novels. Nick Rowley, an investment manager, said he had been obsessed with the spy since childhood. The books were offered for sale by the cricket commentator Henry Blofeld, whose interest had been fired by the fact that Fleming based Bond's arch enemy on his name.

□ The good cause factor often drives buyers crazy at charity sales. The Transport Trust auction at Sotheby's was no exception. One buyer paid £110 for a magnificent wheelnut from the McLaren F1 — the world's fastest production car — while another paid £100 for a fragment from Richard Branson's trans-Pacific balloon. More of an investment, according to a Sotheby's source, was the steering wheel from the racing driver Michael Schumacher's Formula One car, which sold for £150, a third of the normal price. Proceeds go towards the preservation and restoration of all forms of transport.

□ The late motor racing champion James Hunt once said that he had more fun driving his 1957 Austin A35 van than more modern cars. Keeping up with the traffic was more of a challenge, he said. Auctioneers of the slow lane may like to know that this same van is for auction at Brooks, London, next Saturday, estimated at £2,000-£3,000. Brooks, Olympia 2, Hammersmith Road, London: viewing at 81 Clapham Common Westside, London (071-228 8000).

£231,000 (about £154,000). Made by the German factory Kammer and Reinhardt in about 1909 and recently found in the home of an elderly East German woman, the doll is thought to be the only one of its kind. Experts believe that after the doll was completed, its mould was destroyed. A routine sale of dolls and toys takes place at Bonhams on Thursday.

□ Some 1,000 greetings cards sent over a 40 year period to a London East End schoolmaster by his pupils offer a bonanza for ephemera collectors at Academy Auctioneers & Valuers, Northcote House, Northcote Avenue, Ealing, London W5 (081-579 7466), on Tuesday. The selection, which starts in ages, as well as Christmas and birthday cards. Mixed lots are expected to raise between £20 and £60.

□ Bonhams may have abandoned its erotica sales, but it is making up for it on Wednesday with a sale of original pulp fiction art work from the 1940s and 1950s. Desirables include the image of a blonde in a pink negligee, and pom-pom mules which once graced the cover of *Bertrand and the Blondes*, and a sexy brunette in a red dress from *White Slaves of New Orleans*. Estimates range from £200 to £300.

□ Romantics tired of today's obscene and lurid Valentine cards may be tempted by the annual Valentine sale at Christie's (South Kensington), 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7, on Friday. The 150 cards on sale may be expensive — with prices ranging from £30 to £1,000 — but most are complete with a handwritten message. How about a rare early 19th-century paper doll depicting Cupid and containing the immortal lines, "While Jane will be my Valentine, I'll never cease a new" (estimate £120 to £160). Or the earliest offering of all: a hand-made, hand-coloured puzzle purse which, when unfolded, reveals more and more messages (estimate £80 to £120).

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SARAH JANE CHECKLAND

## THE TIMES AUCTIONS DIARY

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PHILLIPS - More Sales. More Places. For details telephone (023) 310609.	SCOTLAND PHILLIPS - More Sales. More Places. For details telephone (031) 225 2266.
SEMLEY AUCTIONEERS - Station Road, Semley, Shillbury, Dorset SP7 9AN. Tel: 0747 55122. Saturday 12th February & Saturday 26th February. Sales fortnightly. Antique & Collectables 1 hour.	

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## Superwoman sprints ahead

ANOTHER month, another mile (or ten) up the jogging learning curve, which is getting steeper by the day. I'm still clinging on, well above the "brisk walking" foothills but, by my reckoning, just below Base Camp Commitment, where a rapid evolution into an athlete with attitude is probably unavoidable. However, as Scarlett nearly said, "I'll think about that next month".

In January we were asked to do four separate training sessions a week: one long run of up to 85 minutes, two shorter jogs from 40 to 50 minutes, and one fartlek (Swedish speed training). My enemy is not my body, for once, but time. The plain fact is that I can't fit them all in. But which one to jettison?

The shorter jogs are a doddle — a mere limbering up — not much true grit needed there. Ever astute, I've spotted that the long jog is the important bit. This is kept for weekends, because "a temporary lassitude" normally overtakes me after the run, i.e. wipe-out. This has caused little comment at home as I

have been lying Camille-like on the sofa practising the art of lassitude since Thailand was called Siam. The only slight difference is that I am now reading articles on impact and stress injuries to the feet and lower legs instead of something more comfortable.

Mel Batty also encouraged us to overdose on carbohydrates. Beyond knowing that wheatear is good, and banana splits are bad, I'm not big on food values so, like some ancient, bewigged member of the judiciary, I'm forced to ask, "Who is Gazza? What are carbohydrates?"

The long march isn't too bad once I've got over the first couple of miles. By then fortysomething stiffness lessens — or perhaps I just go numb. After that I go into a sort of hypnotic trance and simply trundle along. My style is more Eddie the Eagle than Torvill and Dean

straight sixes, and a lot slower than either, but I cover the waterfront at a steady plod.

The speed trial (where you jog, sprint, jog again to get your breath back; repeat until you or your allotted training time expires) is my favourite. Being the Arthur Daley of athletics, I select a user-friendly downhill stretch for the speed section — "speed" is possibly an overstatement — but it certainly feels good to stretch out and thunder past the younger jogging element and see their eyebrows shoot up. If they're watching, I disappear round the corner before slowing down, so they can't see my "goldfish in big trouble" phase. I'm beginning to



CHRISTINE WHEELER

think I might be more of a 400m person.

All this long-distance exertion is taking up a fair whack of time and I have become a woman of two halves — and they are kept strictly separate. Most of my friends and family still simply refuse to believe I am doing any of this. "Some lunatic in *The Times* is using your name, Chris." It is almost as if I walk

into a telephone box wearing my power suit and patent pumps, spin round three times and emerge as Superjogger. Where does everyone think I disappear to for hours on end? Do they suspect I'm practising safe back-to-basics in a *piéd à terre* within hearing of the division bell; or passing the time in a greasy

spoon café with a mug of sweet tea, a packet of fags and *Hello* magazine, stopping only to jump up and down in a puddle on my way home to look convincingly spattered?

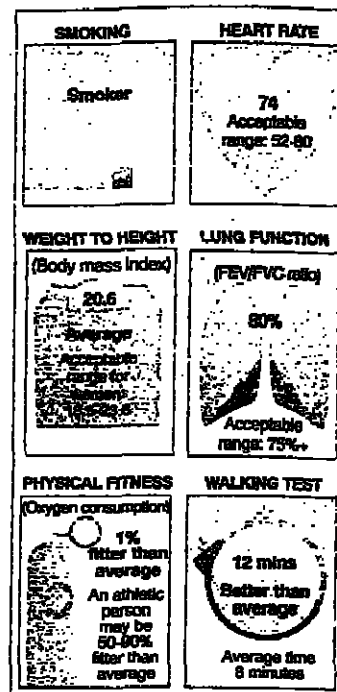
This is not entirely their fault. Even I can't seem to associate my jogging with those thousands of bobbing heads leaving Greenwich Park and refuse to dwell on the event that dare not speak its name in April. Plus I jog alone and like it that way.

However, at this stage I do need to measure my progress against other runners and have submitted a written application to join *The Times* lunchtime A-team: a class act whose athletic CVs are as long as their route from Wapping to Vauxhall Bridge and back. I need not remind you that my own sporting history consists entirely of the odd game of desultory vicarage tennis way back when Credence

Clearwater Revival hit the trannies [transistor radios] — the sort of game where you stop at the net for a natter and a Pimm's before changing ends, need only serve occasionally, and yell "yours" to an energetic partner. I'll be like Ac-crington Stanley joining the Premier League. But I'll take each run as it comes, hoping for an honourable draw and the chance of a replay.

Finally, some bodytalk. Although I've honed down to semi-svelte, I've actually gained weight. I'm told the extra poundage is because my wizened orange-pip muscles have blossomed to at least satsuma size: I have added "muscle bulk". Bulk? Just a minute. This conjures up unhealthy pictures of allegedly female shotputters with excess body hair grunting for gold until the laboratories finally caught up with them. I do not want anyone questioning my chromosomes.

The upside, of course, is that if any chance now tries his luck and squeezes my knee, he will hit solid granite and dislocate his thumb.



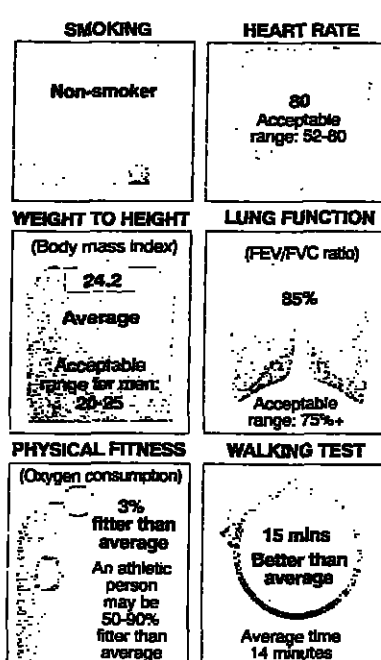
Christine Wheeler's condition

### Guy Walters checks up on two *Times* team members

#### Richard Hinds



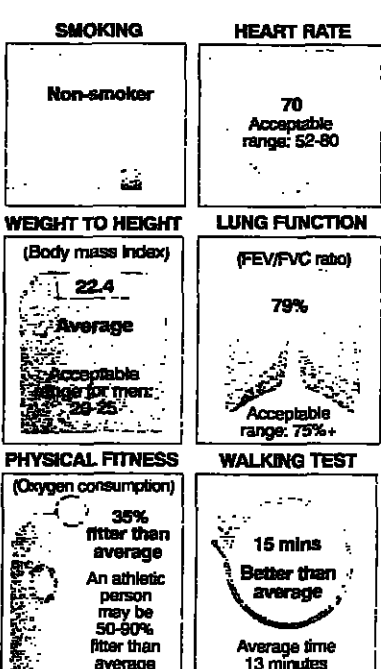
"My reason for entering the marathon is that it is a great incentive to get fit. I tried to enter last year's marathon with some friends from school, but we were all rejected because so many had applied. I would have liked to run it this year in under three hours, but unfortunately I twisted my ankle after an accident. It stopped me running for most of last term, and I was only able to start again after Christmas. I now hope to do the marathon in under four hours. At the moment I'm going on eight-mile runs, which I do in about an hour. My training programme is taken straight from the newspaper, with a little bit extra that I already knew about. I thought that university life might curtail my training programme, but it hasn't. I'm free for much of the day, so it means that I can go running in daylight. My housemates are quite supportive of my training. My Fun Run time was 15 minutes 59 seconds, which I was quite happy with, considering that I was recovering from food poisoning that I had picked up in the Pyrenees. I do not have any ambitions to be a professional runner: what I want to do is to be a geography teacher, but I intend to apply for the marathon next year."



#### Paddy Hunter-Murphy



"Basically, I'm not a runner. I'm running the marathon out of personal achievement, to get fit, and to have a bit of fun. The only running I've done before is the 1990 London Marathon, which I completed in 4 hours 45 minutes. Before, I had always been a bit of an armchair watcher. I must confess that I've just started my training. A last-minute business trip and a family holiday held me back. I'm following Chris Brasher's guidelines in the *NutraSweet* booklet, which I would recommend to my fellow runners. It contains a great 'beginners' guide', which I'm following closely. I find running along the streets useful as it is easier to judge distances. I can say to myself, 'I'll run to that lamp-post, and trot back, and tomorrow I'll go to the next one'. In this way, I can build myself up. I'm also concentrating on psyching myself up just as much as on the physical aspects; that's what helped me get round in 1990. I'm aiming to knock 15 minutes off my time this year. I sometimes get cramp, so what I'm doing is to drink a lot of water, which is really helping. I got cramp very badly on the twentieth mile in 1990, but there were some wonderful women there with a magic spray that got rid of it. 'New legs for old', they said. I hope they'll be there this year."



### Mel Batty's February training plan calls for a return to basic fitness principles

The Prime Minister would approve of our policy for this month because we are going "back to basics". February is often the coldest month of the year and, after a hard winter's training, you are now ready for a period of consolidation.

With the *NutraSweet* London Marathon only ten weeks away, this is the time when you return to what you have learnt over the past few months. Mileage will not greatly increase during February. The aim is rather for your body to become used to the volume of exercise.

Remember the cardinal rules. Listen to your body: if you feel a twinge, as opposed to tiredness, ease off your running. Warm-up properly before a session and take the first mile quite gently: do not sprint out of your front door just because you are full of energy at the start of the session. Dress warmly: if you have suffered in the past from a strain in a particular joint, such as knee or ankle, then buy a support from a sports shop or chemist. It will, at worst, keep the joint warm, which will help prevent any recurrence of the injury.

You should aim to compete in some race over the next two months, preferably a half-marathon. However, if there is not a convenient one, then try a 10,000m on the road. For an inexperienced runner, having

## A time to consolidate



a race longer than a half-marathon within a month of the marathon will be too great a stress on the system. Just ease off the training a little before the event but not too much because your main aim remains the marathon. The race is to give yourself the experience rather than being your best performance.

To prepare for this you must continue with the fartlek (spells of long sustained running, interspersed with jogging), which you have already been doing. Carry a stopwatch and time yourself over a long spell of fast running of between 400m and a mile. Do not forget to warm up thoroughly beforehand. Then, on subsequent sessions, see if you can beat your time.

Do not worry if, from time to time, you experience a poor day. This is quite normal. On other occasions, the reverse occurs. This may be because of your personal bio-rhythms, but whatever the reason, it is something that even the finest athletes encounter.

#### Advanced group

Advanced runners will be consolidating the training this month, with exactly the same schedule for all four weeks.

Each week cover the following: one steady two-hour run; two 60-minute runs; two 50-minute fartleks.

#### Joggers' schedule

Week 1: one 90-minute jog; two 50-minute jogs; one 35-minute fartlek.  
Week 2: one 90-minute jog; two 50-minute jogs; one 40-minute fartlek.  
Week 3: one 100-minute jog; two 55-minute jogs; one 40-minute fartlek.  
Week 4: one 110-minute jog; two 55-minute jogs; one 40-minute fartlek.

JOHN GOODBODY

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39 Courtfield Gardens, London SW5 0PL. Tel: 071 244 8884 Fax: 071 244 7518

#### GREGORY'S CHANTS

Nobody can explain why a double CD of Gregorian chants has sold 260,000 copies and is top of the album charts, ahead of Gloria Estefan and the remastered Beatles. Madrid's catholic ABC newspaper and the monks of the Benedictine monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos, near Burgos, who after 900 years of practice recorded bits of the compilation album in 1973, 1980 and 1981, say it is all about back to basics. EMI Odeon, the record company that released the record, claims it is the successor to heavy metal.



#### RICH KIDS

Barbourous furs pijos are the spoilt brats who live on daddies' money and *pijolandia* is where they hang out in their new British uniforms. Open the door at one of their new dives and there is a blast of air fragrant with waxed Barbours.

Microskinned Barbour dolls from the British Institute school chat about weekend polo at the Club Puerta de Hierro or who and when Prince Felipe and the Infantas, the King's two daughters, will marry. The latest word is that Elena, 30, will get hitched this year to a Spanish aristocrat, Jaime de Marichalar, also 30. *Pijo* mothers stubbornly keep their furs. Unlike New York, where such displays provoke attacks from animal rights radicals, the only spray a Madrid señora will get on her mink will be from a mugger trying to divert attention while he snatches her Loewe handbag.

## MODES

Madrid

A weekly look at the world of international trends and trend-setters

#### CLOSED FOR REFORM

About 50 of Madrid's top restaurants have closed in the past year and this is the sign that is often hung from the door. Smarmy *maitres d's* serving *nueva cocina* tapas as main courses at rip-off prices have been banished and the old-fashioned *cocinas* are back in fashion. Castilian roasts are still piled on earthenware plates at Botin, Casa Ciriaco and Casa Lucio (patronised by the King).

#### WHEELS

There are still traffic jams in old Madrid until 4am and some discos, such as Boccaccio, stay open until 10am. Drunk drivers know the crisis has made the police ration their own petrol, and many of their aging patrol cars have been summoned for the equivalent of the MOT.

#### DEATH OF THE YUPPIES

Madrid yuppies were poleaxed on December 28, Spain's All Fool's Day, when their unofficial leader was dislodged. Whiz kid Mario Conde, the young Brylcreemed president of Banesto, Spain's fourth largest bank, was fired by the Bank of Spain when accounting irregularities were discovered. The big question is: was he a victim of the current economic crisis or did he help cause it? Whatever the answer, rave rather than save seems to be the instinct of post-yuppie Madrileños, who now have even less confidence in banks and their own futures.

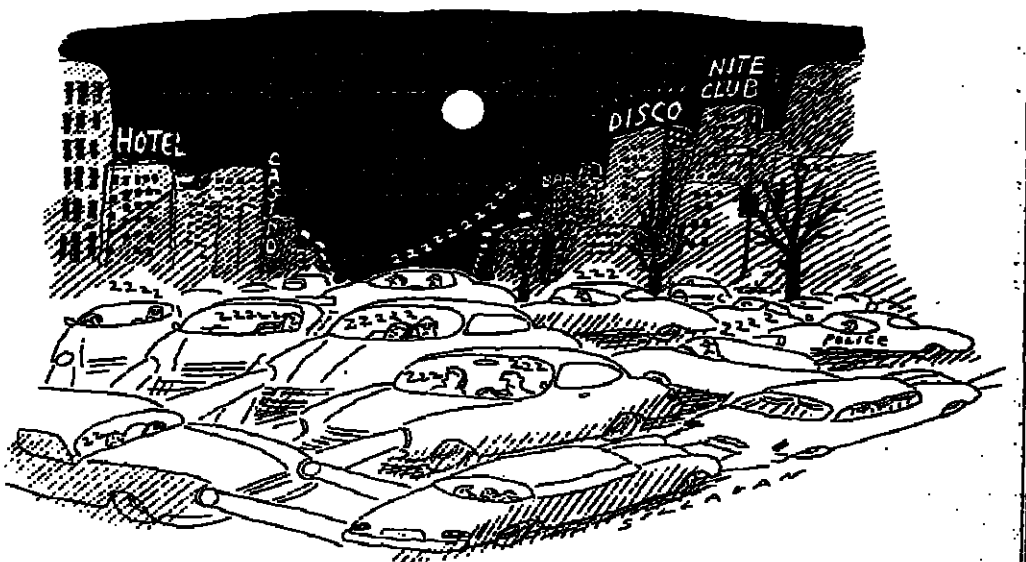
#### THE COCK

An essential stop after dinner is The Cock, a chubbly pub where the latest gossip is about Bibi having just had his surgically removed. The regulars are the *trasmoches* or former communists of the Franco era who are now neoteric writers, comedians or television stars. The question here is whether Pedro Almodóvar, the cult film director, will now marry Bibi (formerly Manolo) Andersen, the statuesque blonde star of his films, since the civil registry has just recognised her sex change.

#### THE BARS

Economic crisis is a great leveller. At La Cava Real, one of only two wine bars in Madrid, discerning imbibers range from government ministers to the Harley Davidson motor-cycle club. At Viridiana, flaming *entremeses* from the inventive chef, also Spain's top horse-racing commentator, feed worried stockbrokers and extravagant thespians. The "in" wines are Pesquera red from Ribera del Duero and Albariño white from Galicia.

EDWARD OWEN







Ray Woolgar wears a 'Connor' hat, about £15 at race tracks, and a Selfridges mackintosh. His daughter Lorraine wears a Selfridges wool coat, about £250, and Jigsaw jumper.

## A winner in the fashion stakes

Real horse people wrap up warm and descend on Kempton even on wet winter days

This is hardly Royal Ascot. A drizzly afternoon in late January among London's southwestern suburbs is an unlikely setting for the racing fraternity.

Not everyone can appreciate the attraction of spending a cold, wet, winter afternoon watching horses chasing each other round a track. In the search for two sheets of newspaper to line the cat-litter tray, quite a few of us rip out the City pages and the racing reports: usually not in that order. Someone in the family might have an IC1 share. Not many have a horse running in the 2.30 at Uttoxeter.

Punters at Kempton Park, in southwest London, like the horses. They like a bet. They like the people and the sense of shared excitement. But mostly it is the atmosphere that appeals to them.

The racing calendar is split into two overlapping seasons — jumping from August to mid-May; flat racing from mid-March to November. The followers of fences and hurdles are a little patronising about the flat. Flat racing is for fair weather people who worry about hypothermia. Fences and hurdles — i.e. the jumping season that is going on at the moment — are for true horse people. Joanne Morris, 29, from Epsom, says: "People do not come to Kempton in the jumping season to see or be seen."

Miss Morris was perhaps not the best person to make this point. There was not a lot of glamour at Kempton, but much of what there was came from Miss Morris. Certainly there was little among the men. The male ideal seems to be conventional rather than pretty. A small, but striking, minority in Italian suits, camel-hair coats and Gucci shoes talked and looked as though Thatcher were still on the throne and £50 notes were still for lighting Havanas. Most, though, were dressed in variations of a uniform that owed more to the long summer of Edwardian England than the

short autumn of the stock market crash.

The main feature was the brown trilby hat. Both the brown tweed coat and the bristly brown moustache were cavalry-cut, as were the jacket and trousers on the brown tweed suit. The brown brogue or buckskin shoes would also have been cavalry cut if there were such a thing.

For the women, the colours were firmly towards the light-absorbing end of the spectrum. The only glitter was the shine on the clasps of navy blue handbags and on the buttons of navy blue overcoats. Hats tended to be black, as though in mourning for the Unknown Jockey.

Or it may have been the Unknown Bookmaker. Much of the romance of the racing course comes from the on-course bookmakers and their tic-tac men — the scrawled odds, the machine-gun patter, the incomprehensible sign language. It is down at Tattersall Corner, among torn betting slips and bundles of notes won and lost, that Kempton Park feels like racing.

Ray Charles Woolgar has been on the courses of southern England for 43 years. 23 years with his father, and 20 years as his own man. It is a race course tradition that bookmakers carry names with the ring of music hall comedians — "Sidney Lewis", "Ivor Perry", "Fred Blinn". Sometimes they have to give nature a hand. Ray Woolgar's father, Charles James, dropped the "Woolgar" and Ray is now the second "Charles James". At weekends, his daughter, Lorraine, 24, an art director for an advertising agency, takes over from her mother at Ray's side. When Ray retires she will become the third Charles James.

Pitches cannot be bought and sold. They are passed down through families. A pitch, a loud voice and a mathematical brain have always been a guarantee of a livelihood, but now, according to Ray Woolgar, profits are falling. The recession and the rise of betting shops in the

grandstand are squeezing the on-course bookmaker. Roy Black, the tic-tac man for Steve Wilkinson, showed me an article in *Sporting Life* blaming the decline in takings on the shabbiness and conservatism of the bookmakers.

Looking around, I found the article hard to understand. The bookmakers seem to be the blood of the business — their bags painted like the sides of circus trailers, their hands flying, laughing with the street-seller's croak, like the sound of badgers choking slowly to death.

As far as the horses themselves are concerned, I can only say that each had four legs, a head and a thin passenger. They all looked very much healthier than the statue of Desert Orchid, ghastly pale with sticking ribs, stuck in the forecourt. Mediator struck me as particularly attractive crossing the line of the Bic Lady Shaver Handicap Hurdle; perhaps because he was wearing my shirt on his back.

JAMES HEPBURN



Above: Joanne Morris, 29, works for a multinational company. Her black hat is a Christmas present bought from Harvey Nichols, her bright orange wool coat from Country Casuals, about £200. Jumper, about £95, and scarf, about £30, from Harvey Nichols. She says: "People do not come to Kempton in the jumping season to see or be seen."



Left: Hannah Lewis, 19, (in hat) is studying education with art at Oxford Brookes University. Her sister, Zoe Lewis, 20, is studying criminology at Roehampton. Their brother Guy is a jockey and has just turned professional. Hannah wears a black Next hat with pompoms, for about £20, a cream wool jacket, about £50, and black wool skirt, both from River Island, a Marks & Spencer shawl, about £30, and Vivendi shoes. Zoe wears a black pin-striped Debenhams shawl, about £30, a black jacket from Planet Mother, a Monsoon shirt and her mother's shoes.

Photographs: Martin Beddall



Nick Abraham, 29, and Joanne Abraham, 23, above, work in the betting business. Joanne wears a black River Island hat, a black wool Nuage coat, £119, and a Next jumper. Nick has forgotten where his clothes came from.

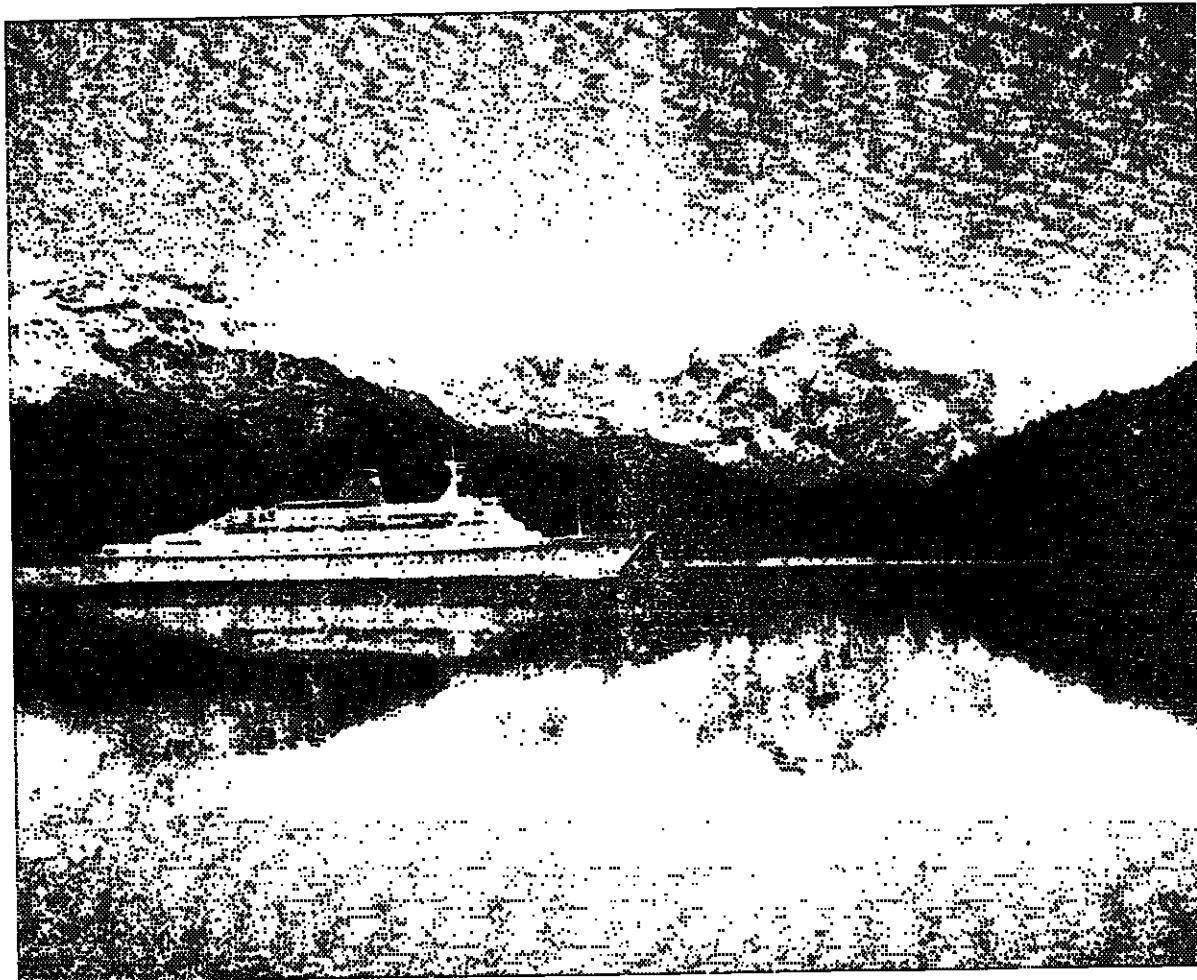
Left: the Horton family and friend — compulsive racegoers. Clockwise from top left: Melvin Horton wears a trilby, an Yves Saint Laurent raincoat, Liberty tie and Principles suit. His wife, Mo, wears a black Kangol hat, a navy blue military-style riding coat from Army & Navy and Italian riding boots. Their daughter Lara, seven, wears a Trader checked jacket, a Fruit of the Loom top, Gap trousers and Clark shoes. Her friend Alicia Nevill, also seven, wears Clark shoes and a Fruit of the Loom top, but forgets where the rest of her wardrobe came from.

### Racing facts

There are 59 race courses in Great Britain. For a full list of 1994 meetings send a stamped addressed envelope to Race Course Communications, Winkfield Road, Ascot, Berkshire SL5 7HX.

Contact numbers for a selection of courses:  
Kempton Park (0932) 782292  
Royal Ascot (0234) 22211  
Newmarket (0638) 663482  
Ayr (0292) 264179  
Nottingham (0602) 580620  
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She tries to make the books as near the "real adult thing" as possible, with such touches as author's biographical details — "Robert Palmer is 74. He likes charming essay that gets a big tick," says Lois Beeson, the competition organiser. "It's something public and celebratory."

charge about half goes towards costs."

charge about 15 quid. The other half goes towards production costs."

W.H. Smith also publishes young authors and organises launch parties for the winners of its annual Young Writers' competition, whose work is published in an anthology.

"A launch is another way of saying, 'You're a real writer', and not just someone who has written a charming essay that gets a big tick," says Lois Beeson, the competition organiser. "It's something public and celebratory."

W.H. Smith hopes to organise a

**Hoagy Dunnell, ten, a novelist in the making, polishes the syntax in his book for his publisher. Susanna Freymark**

national party for the launch of the 1994 anthology. Each fundraiser will be held at a different local venue. W.H. Smith. "The extraverts like the parties to be held while the shop is open, while the quieter ones prefer a select after-hours gathering," Ms Beeson says. "But they're always a good thrash, with lots of peanuts all over the floor."

W.H. Smith took over the competition from the *Daily Mirror* in 1977, when it had already been going nearly 20 years, and a typical year will attract more than 30,000 entrants. Entrants to the competition are of all ages and have included Shoshana Mackay and Marina Warner — can choose both form (prose, poetry or play) and subject, although in any one year can only predict some themes, such as dinosaurs or Bosnia or the environment". Ms Beeson says. The judges, headed by Ted Hughes, will be looking for "originality and freshness: a sense that the child just had to write the piece". Prizes include £60 for the ten best in the 13 age groups, £50 for the nine to 12-year-olds and £40 for the eight and 9-year-olds.

W.H. Smith can be contacted at Tylden Road, London NW9 4TH (0181-4988). Young Writers competition details and entry forms from all branches of W.H. Smith or direct from Lois Beeson, W.H. Smith Corp. Affairs Division, Strand House, 7 Fleet Place, London SW1W 0JH (0181-4545). Closing date February 15.

Information packs for the Young Journalist of the Year competition

In a few months, Trevor McDonald, the ITN newscaster, will start lifting through thousands of en-

tries to pick the third Barclay's Young Journalist of the Year Award. Would-be scribes are asked to investigate an aspect of the charity Sightsaver's work on the cure and prevention of blindness in developing countries. They are expected to undertake research, interview appropriate people and report their findings in the style of a newspaper or magazine article. The winner in the 12-to-16 age group will be taken to Africa or south Asia to see Sightsavers in action, while the winner in the eight to 11 group will receive an Apple Macintosh computer. The prize-winning articles will be published in the charity's newsletter.

**LIZ GILL**

● Ms Freyemark can be contacted at 12A Twicken Road, London NW5 071-367-4983). Young Writers competition: details and entry forms from local branches of W.H. Smith or direct from Lois Beeson, W.H. Smith Corporate Affairs Division, Strand House, 7 Holbein Place, London SW1 SNR 071-824 5456). Closing date February 26. Information packs for the Young Journalist of the Year competition are available from Ace Clarke, Signissavers, PO Box 191, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 4YF [0444 412342]. Closing date March 31.

(From left) Jack Matthewman, Morgan Malwah, Morgan McGlyn, Hoagy Dunnell, Daniel George, Anthony Ford, Meredith Malwah with copies of their published works

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# Monument to a hedged bet

Levens Hall in Cumbria, famous for its topiary garden, celebrates its third centenary this year



Topiary at Levens Hall



The gardens at Levens Hall in Cumbria have survived the gardening fashions of three centuries under the guidance of one family

A garden won by a turn of the ace of hearts on a card table in 1694 is this year celebrating its third centenary. The same family has safely steered it through an assault course of daunting proportions, surviving the vicissitudes of fashion, two world wars and, more recently, modern planning.

When topiaries were being grubbed up throughout England in the 18th century, that at Levens Hall in Cumbria was preserved by a stubborn loyalty of the Countess of Sussex and Berkshire, Catherine Grahme, to the memory of her father Colonel James Grahme and his friend Guillaume Beaumont, the landscape gardener who designed it.

Topiary is the hallmark of Levens Hall, but this is not the whole story, as it was only one of a galaxy of gardens originally laid out around the Elizabethan mansion. Since the arrival from Kew Gardens seven years ago of a new head gardener, Chris Crowder, aged 23, and under the encouraging and judicious care of the present generation of owners, Hal and Susan Bagot, the garden has enjoyed a renaissance and is as original now

as it was when Beaumont created a stir with his radical ideas on landscape design.

Three hundred years ago the fabled topiary began its life conventionally as the clipped low hedges that made up parterres, but Beaumont's revolutionary idea was the creation at Levens of the first ha-ha in England.

People visiting Levens for the first time are dazzled by the topiary and the variety of plants. Those who know it well hardly give the topiary a second glance in the summer but rush to see what has caught Mr Crowder's imagination. Last year, swathes of Excelsior hybrid foxgloves completely dwarfed the rose garden; this year, an initial display of 200 Elizabethan primroses in the 17th-century garden may be the start of a permanent collection.

This winter, to mark the tercentenary, a new garden has been created, called the Fountain Garden. In one of the quarried gardens, retaining the proportions of Beaumont's original design (which shows a beech circle, although nobody knows what the circle was intended for), a pool has been created to have water lilies on

the surface, with shoals of golden orfe swimming below. In its centre will be a fountain producing a single jet. Four crossing axial paths have been planted with 70 limes which, over the next 15 years, will grow inwards at the top to meet in the middle to form tunnels.

The Fountain Garden is the latest of the Bagots' innovations to the garden. They will also be remembered for introducing water to the garden for the first time.

At Levens, the budget allows only four full-time gardeners, so the most important consideration is upkeep, preferably doing as much as possible in the winter. Time-consuming herbaceous borders, for example, are being streamlined by replacing floppy plants that need staking and tying with shrub roses, or perennials, which keep themselves erect. These range from dramatic architectural plants such as *Cynara cardunculus* (the Cardoon) and *Crambe cordifolia* to the delicate yet robust little flowers of *Astrantia major* and *Stachys macrantha*.

Heavy mulching in spring with a sterile mushroom compost, just as perennials are pushing through, stifles the growth of annual weeds.

Likewise, the vegetable borders are designed to outwit rabbits, who nibble their way through half the vegetables grown. Thirty wigwags play host to fascinating varieties of runner beans in scarlet, yellow and stripes, with the most striking being a purple-podded Italian pole bean "Viola Cornetti" which, sadly, turns green when cooked. These are underplanted with gourds, courgettes, squash, pumpkins and marrow whose abundant, quick-spreading foliage acts as ground cover over the beds.

When the colourful and decorative fruit is ready to be harvested the plants do not fall apart and lose their leaves or turn brown but continue looking lush and verdant well into autumn — unlike the parterre, which is planned out in October for spring and then again in May, with summer bedding demanding the rearing of 15,000 plants.

In the nursery, the 50 hazels were planted directly into grass to eliminate labour-intensive summer weeding. They have taken longer to establish but the first of many nuts appeared last year.

To the visitors, it's a garden of dramatic visual treats, such as the foggy garden; the white and

yellow border; the grey border; and the big herbaceous borders designed on one side with stark, strong colours and opposed by lighter pastel shades; the scarlet *tropaeolum speciosum* scrambling up the yew hedges, wigwags of golden hops, ornamentally twisting corkscrew hazels, and exciting scents.

VIVIAN RUSSELL

## WEEKEND TIPS

- Make sure that the ground under newly planted and dwarf fruit trees and bushes is weed-free.
- Start *achimenes tubers* into growth, laying them in a tray of sandy compost and watering lightly; transfer to pots or hanging baskets when the shoots reach about 12cm/5in.
- Prune dead, diseased and crossing branches from which hazards after they have finished flowering.
- Prepare ground for sowing a new lawn by digging, levelling and firming, and removing all weeds.
- Chit potatoes (encourage them to sprout) in seed trays set in a light frost-free place — not in direct sun.

# A fashion victim returns

Malmaison carnations, a Victorian favourite, are being rescued from oblivion

The name "Souvenir de la Malmaison" was given not only to the beautiful Bourbon rose, but to a remarkable carnation originating in France in the mid-19th century, which was no less famous in its day. This "Souvenir de la Malmaison" was a seedling of the tree carnation or remouant, but is an altogether more handsome and compact plant, with wide, grey-green leaves, the largest and most full-petalled flowers ever seen in this genus, and scent as powerful and rich as the old clove gillyflowers.

For 60 years up to the First World War, this plant and other equally gorgeous cultivars bred from it were the height of fashion. They were used at banquets and balls; bunches were picked for the table; and large pots of full-grown plants with a hundred or so fragrant blooms lined terraces in summer.

The huge blooms were adopted as a gentleman's buttonhole — Oscar Wilde's famous carnation was most likely a Malmaison — and large estates had Malmaison glasshouses dedicated to raising these opulent carnations. However, the horticultural hiatus during the First World War, the dramatic changes in garden-staffing levels which followed, and the introduction of new types of carnation from the United States pushed the Malmaisons almost to extinction.

Renewed interest in historic garden flowers, some horticultural sleuthing and modern plant technology have resulted in the rediscovery and propagation of Malmaisons. In conjunction with the National Trust for Scotland at its property at Crathes Castle near Banff, Jim Marshall, who has worked both at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, and for the National Trust, has taken custody of the five precious Malmaison carnations still in existence.

The original "Souvenir de la Malmaison" (sometimes known as "Old Blush") is safe and well, as is the salmon pink "Princess of Wales", but the famous crimson "Red Souvenir de la Malmaison" no longer exists. Nothing is known of the history of "Tayside Red", but it has been conserved at Crathes for many years. Of two surviving turn-

of-the-century Malmaisons, "Duchess of Westminster" has pink, slightly smaller flowers with a heavenly scent, and "Thora" comes into flower bluish pink and fades to white.

The modern gardener has no need of a Malmaison house, only a cool but frost-free porch or greenhouse. The plants grow slowly and should not be allowed to flower in the first year. The stems should be pinched out, and four or five strong shoots encouraged to make strong growth, which should bear flowers in Victorian profusion.

The detective work continues: Mr Marshall is on the track of "Marmion" (a showy crimson flower edged in white and reputedly one of the strongest scented), which has



Malmaison carnation

been rumoured to be in Cornwall. He is confident of one day tracking down the last Malmaison to be introduced: "Queen Mother", which was bred by the Sussex nurseryman Allwoods in the 1950s, and so-called because of the Queen Mother's liking for these, even then, old-fashioned flowers.

FRANCESCA GREENOAK

● If you would like to try growing these historic pot plants, write to Jim Marshall, 4 The Danville, Taibury, Gloucestershire GL8 8JA, enclosing £14.50 for rooted cuttings of each of the five surviving Malmaisons.

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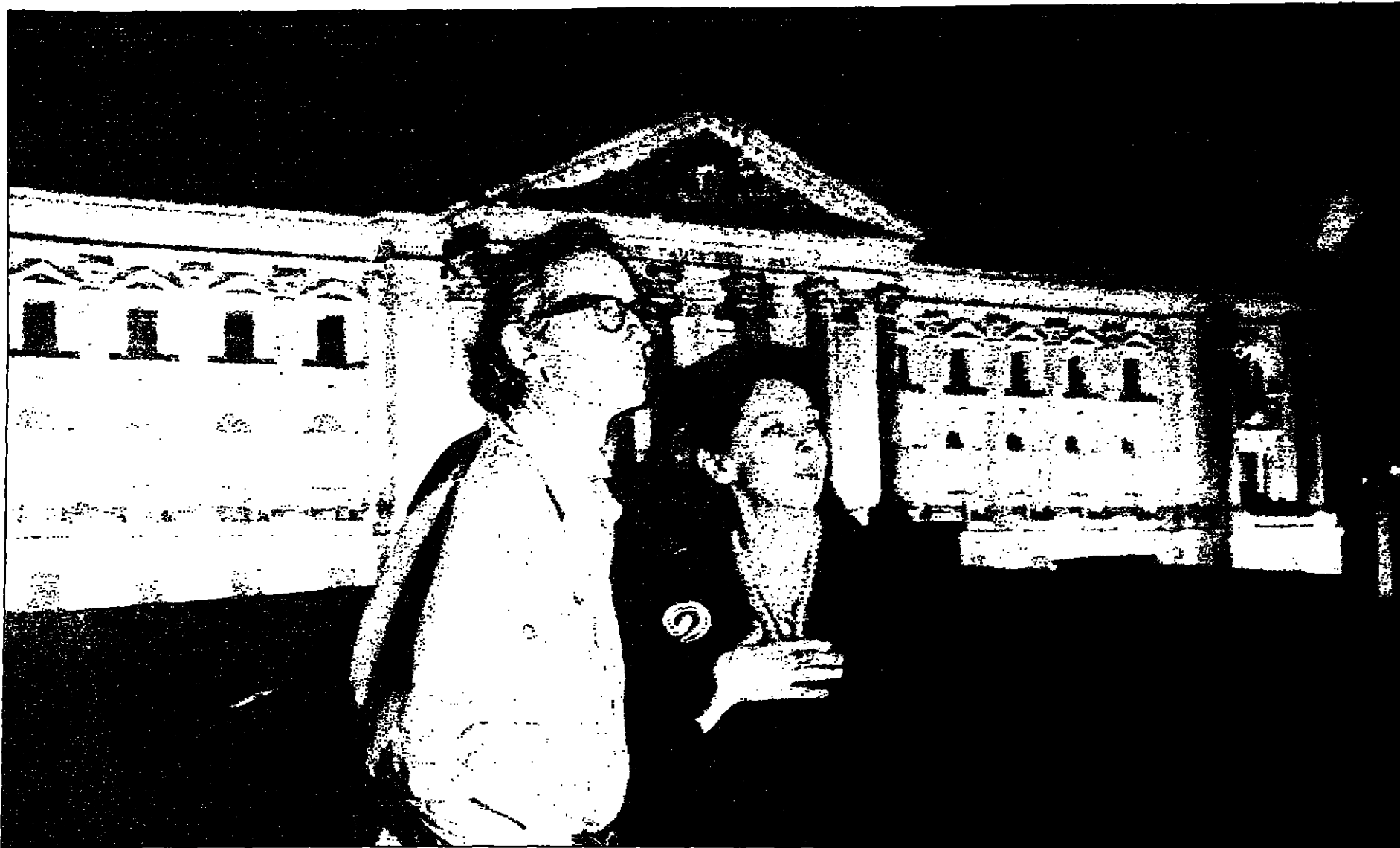
**COUNTRY WARMTH**







Christo is winning his long campaign to package Germany's old parliament. Roger Boyes reports



Christo and his wife, Jeanne-Claude, in front of the Reichstag building in Berlin from *Christo: The Reichstag and Urban Projects*, edited by Jacob Baal-Teshuva. Prestel/Thames & Hudson. £25. Below, an artist's impression of how the building will look encased in 100,000 metres of silvery fabric; Christo will cover the £4 million cost

## Wrapping the Reichstag

Christo, the Great Packager, appears to be within an inch of achieving his long-standing goal: to wrap up Germany's Reichstag. The American-Bulgarian artist has been lobbying German politicians for more than 20 years and, despite opposition from Chancellor Kohl, he seems at last to have swung critical votes behind the project.

The German parliament, meeting in an unusual full session, must reach a decision this month, because the buildings and architects — chief of whom is Sir Norman Foster — are impatient to begin the re-modelling of the Reichstag into a functioning parliament for the new united Germany. The Reichstag is supposed to be ready for modern parliamentary use by the year 2000. "Covered in scaffolding, it has no interest for me," said Christo on a recent last-minute bid to win over his critics.

His plan is, as ever, simple. Some 100,000 metres of silvery fabric will be sewn together and taken in rolls to the top of the building by a large team of stepladders. The fabric will then be unfurled and hide the darkened, battle-scarred facade. Strong rope will then be lashed around, corseing the building and emphasising its shape. Will the Reichstag retain its faint sense of menace, the heaviness of history, or will it float free? An old

lady in stays? An unwanted present? Christo, now 58, does not know: he has never packaged a political building before.

There have been of course many Christo events: the thousands of blue and yellow umbrellas in Japan and California, the shrouded canyons, the islands surrounded with floating pink, the miles and miles of fences snaking through deserts, the plastic foil that wrapped a part of the Australian outback, the packaging of the bridge in Paris.

The Reichstag has fascinated Christo since 1970. Then it stood hard on the east-west border in Berlin, a lonely building far off the beaten track for West Berliners, and showing its back to the East. For East Berliners brave enough to swim across the river-border, dodging the heavily-armed patrol boats and floating mines, the Reichstag was the finishing point, freedom's landmark.

Christo's grasp of German history is not entirely sure — "I can't exactly say what the Reichstag means for



Pont Neuf

Germany because I'm not German" — and this has weakened his arguments over the years. At first he argued that to cover the building, and then uncover it, would increase German awareness of their Nazi history, since it was there that Hitler made his fiercest speeches, the very cradle of the Third Reich. But Christo was wrong: Hitler made no important speeches there. The building was burnt down shortly after Hitler's takeover in 1933. The German parliament actually met during the Nazi years in the nearby Krolloper.

The Reichstag may look sinister

but it is not, in fact, the devastating symbol of evil that Christo imagined. Christo was forced to shift ground in his pleading for the great wrap-up operation. The Reichstag, he said, was a symbol of the division of Europe. Cover it, uncover it and you say something about that East-West split. For some years the parliamentarians brooded on this proposition. Then the Berlin Wall fell and Christo had to search for a new argument. Nowadays he

says, with his special candour, that the building is a "magnet", an object of fascination quite separate from the violent zigzags of German history. The Speaker of the German parliament, Rita Süssmuth, has been convinced, as has the mayor of Berlin, Eberhard Diepgen. Not that Herr Diepgen needed to make much of an artistic judgment. Christo has promised to cover the DM10 million (£4 million) costs himself — the money flows back from postcards, prints and other marketing ventures. In other words the project will not cost the German taxpayer a single

pennig. On the contrary, it should stimulate the local economy.

East German companies will receive the contract for making the fabric. And the packaging — expected to last a fortnight — is supposed to give tourism to Berlin a big boost. Christo's supporters in Berlin include not only politicians but taxi drivers, bar keepers and coach tour operators — not so much patrons of the arts as people with a nose for profit.

The strange aspect of this long debate is that the Reichstag, designed by Paul Wallot in 1884, is not particularly beautiful, nor was it by any stretch of the imagination Berlin's greatest work of architecture. But this is not Christo's concern: the Reichstag will make a great parcel. Whether it will be great art remains to be seen. Architectural writer Wolf Jobst Siedler comes out in favour of the project, though he hardly brims with enthusiasm: "As a work of art this spectacle will be of limited value, but the damage done by the venture will also be limited."

Christo claims, not without some pretension, that lobbying is part of the overall artwork. "It's like a painter who uses red and yellow to get orange," he says. "My 'colours' are generals and officials. If I fail to mix them in the right way, it doesn't work out." The art of persuasion — or persuasion as art?

## Party for Palestrina

Traffic stops in Rome to let the Tallis Scholars celebrate

For one brief evening in February, a small part of central Rome was almost entirely silent. Two roads had been closed to traffic, and new double-glazing installed in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore by the Vatican technical services department.

This unprecedented initiative was in honour of an English choir summoned to Rome to celebrate the 400th anniversary on Wednesday of the death of the great Renaissance composer, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina.

Gianetto, they called him, the young lad spotted by the choirmaster of Santa Maria Maggiore in 1537, encouraged to train there and finally to take up his own position as *maestro di cappella*. The Accademia di Santa Cecilia, which had invited the Tallis Scholars to Rome, not to be outdone staged its own celebratory concert on Wednesday in another venue. But Peter Phillips and his choir had the coup: a live concert, simultaneously recorded and televised in Palestrina's own church, flooded in to reveal the 5th-century mosaics the length of the vast nave as they had never been seen before.

To reflect the splendour of the occasion, the Tallis Scholars had chosen some of Palestrina's largest-scale works: the double choir settings of the *Stabat Mater* and the *Magnificat*, and — to show off the clarity and perfection of tuning and balance for which they are so admired in Italy — the

elegant, slim-line *Missa Papae Marcelli*.

Pope Marcellus's Mass forestalled the complaints of the Council of Trent, who would have had everyone going back to singing plain-song, so determined was it to make music and its message plainly understood once again. Palestrina showed that this would hardly be necessary by composing a Mass of sombre economy of musical means.

The slightest shifts in pitch and metre guide the music's expression with a subtlety captured meticulously by the Tallis Scholars. Voice answered voice, and consonants bounced hard and clear from the gold on the 15th-century coffered ceiling.

After this came the sensuous lifting of the *Stabat Mater*'s long chain of verses, one eight-part choir answering its counterpart with firm rhythmic concentration as phrases echoed and mingled. Phillips made the *Magnificat* *primi toni* brisk, even business-like. But he was unable to resist playing the Basilica's acoustic space to its limits, splitting his forces into three widely spaced units for the vocal virtuosity of Allegri's *Miserere*. Together with an unscheduled and valedictory *Nunc dimittis*, it concluded the evening's festivities.

Outside, the police and the carabinieri took down the barriers, unleashed the traffic, and Rome began to breathe again.

HILARY FINCH



Palestrina, the great composer who died 400 years ago

THEATRE: Eddie Izzard and, below, a stage incarnation of Albie Sachs

## Cherub with a devil's wit

FOR all I know, Eddie Izzard rehearses his routines very carefully. Maybe he does some warm-up exercises with that depraved-cherub face of his, then practises his tripping, bobbing run in front of a mirror, and ends the morning by mumbling and jabbering into a cassette-player: a fun-bling up-er here and a malapropism there, a weird circumlocution here and a babble of imitation telephone scammers there.

If so, he certainly does a fine job. He makes the most informal comic on television — a medium, incidentally, he prefers to shun — seem as trim and deliberate as a box hedge. True, he isn't as dirty or mad-looking as the sort of man you sometimes see free-associating to himself on the Tube, but it is still rather as if he had been asked to come to the top of the escalator and verbally bask a bit. The clothes — striped

Eddie Izzard  
Albery

blouse, Al Capone jacket, black ski-pants from *Hamlet* — add to the ad-hoc feel.

His monologue proceeds by fits and starts, punctuated by fits and stops. One moment the subject is the odd propensity of dust to defy Newton by flying upwards, then it's transvestism, then vases, then gossip, and all without obvious reason, let alone rhyme. If an idea has only a few seconds' life in it ("I'm a rabble, waiting to be roused") he will drop it after a few seconds. If it is worth more, he will play it as diversely as an angler: a pianist and a small boy rolled into one.

His special gift seems to be for taking the most ordinary experiences, ones everybody can share, and rendering



Spotlight on Eddie Izzard

them strange and sometimes surreal. The cat seems to be purring behind the sofa. What is it really doing? Why, it has surreptitiously donned goggles and is drilling for gold. A pair of blue pants are suddenly spied at the front of the

washing machine. Why? Someone has infiltrated them there, in order to spread dismay and horror amid the white-wash population. And what did the spaceman say when he stepped onto the Moon? "One small step for a man, a piece of piss for a frog." Square reabage, Prime Minister's questions, mountain goats, Sir Ranulph Fingleton-Twilight-Fiennes, street markets, dogs, macho idiots, migrating birds, horror movies, bees and wasps, politically correct jars emblazoned "made by bunny rabbits out of fruit that agreed to be jam": is there no end to Izzard's serendipity and mugging skills? An item on *Star Trek* struck me as too long, but only because I am not a fan. Otherwise, I would have been happy if he had rambled on all night.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

## Body dynamic

Soft Vengeance  
BAC, Battersea

IT WAS 16 years ago that the life of the black South African Albie Sachs, exiled lawyer and leading member of the ANC, was first re-created on the English stage. The Royal Shakespeare Company realised David Edgar's dramatisation of Sachs's jail diaries in 1978.

In 1988, Sachs was setting out to go jogging by the sea in Maputo when he was blown 30 feet into the air by a bomb planted by the apartheid regime. He was blinded in one eye and lost his right arm. Within seven months he was running on the same beach, still seeking a peaceful end to the violence.

His combination of positive action and spiritual mettle in the face of injury makes this

part of Sachs's story acutely appropriate material for April De Angelis's new play performed by Graeae, Britain's best-known theatre company of disabled people. Challenging typical definitions of "disabled", Albie's nurse, who gets him in and out of the bath, is played by a one-armed actress, Deborah Williams.

Meanwhile, Albie, determined to overcome the physical damage he has sustained,

is the able-bodied Ray Harrison Graham. His pessimistic, anti-progressive alter ego, Albie Night-time (white actor Ewan Marshall), has one arm.

Williams, as warmly comic as she is pragmatically efficient, is extraordinarily convincing in both male and female roles: an absurd copper or the buxom home-help, Sarah Scott is awkward as Sachs's mother, but briefly comes into her own speaking animatedly in sign language as Sachs's occupational therapist and lover.

De Angelis, by having Sachs split in two, is provided

with a strong image for the psychologically shattering effects of the bomb and introduces some dramatic conflict. Overall, however, *Soft Vengeance* is not immensely theatrical and the script — again an adaptation of Sachs — is not notably inspired. Matt Stringer, translating for deaf members of the audience, was often more intense and inspired with the physical poetry of his hand gestures.

Ultimately, Graham carries the show on his shoulders, intriguingly capturing Sachs's intonations, though his own hearing is impaired. He enriches the evening with his warmth, wry humour and dynamism.

KATE BASSETT

## Memories of old Shanghai

DANCE Continuum's programme, part of the Chinese arts festival "Hands Across the Sea", started promisingly with *Art Song*, a work using music by eight Chinese composers who experimented with Western musical forms, such as might have been heard in Shanghai in the 1930s.

How accurately Michael Ho's staging and choreography evoked a musical soiree of that place and period I am in no position to say, but the music was well presented by Dai-Chi Chiu's piano playing, with songs by Der-Shin Hwang (mezzo-soprano) and Wen-Hao Tsai (baritone).

The most striking episode was Michelle Christophi's solo, to a song called *Selling Flowers*. The other numbers were pleasingly varied, although seeing a connection between their dramatic content, and the translations of the songs in the programme, was none too easy. However, the cast all looked good in this piece and its premise was unusual enough to create interest. Unfortunately, from that point the programme went steeply downhill.

Ho's other contribution,

Taiwan Connection  
Purcell Room

Going Gershwin, at least had the benefit of that composer's music: two preludes and an impromptu, plus ten of his best-known songs arranged for piano. This gave its six dancers lively enough action, but all fairly predictable.

The remaining work, *Little Sister, What Colour Flower Are You Wearing in Your Hair?*, was by Hi Ching, who founded and directs Dance Continuum jointly with Ho. Again, the music, a selection of Chinese folk songs, provided some merit. But Der-Shin Hwang had to sing them while involved in a farrago of absurd flouncing, preening, fan-waving and unwrapping of draperies by the dancers, and much cavorting and shouting of crazy remarks by an actor who looked as embarrassed as we spectators felt. It was supposed to illustrate Yin and Yang, cool and passionate, man and woman. Fiddlersicks.

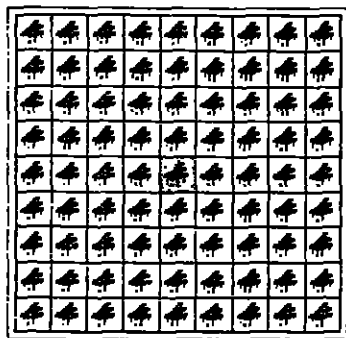
JOHN PERCIVAL

### THE SUNDAY TIMES

What could have turned out as some precious architectural statement emerges instead — despite some moments of let-down — as a likeable, working building. For what is meant to be the resort of a sybaritic, elite minority, it is positively modest. I have a small picnic-hamper: I should like to bring it here one day...

Hugh Pearman on the reborn Glyndebourne — in *The Culture*, The Sunday Times tomorrow

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# Why should Michelin turn its nose up at our trough?

**S**rubbed again! This time it really hurts. It is not as though I am expecting any special recognition for what I do, but at least a nod in my direction would have been in order. It is not as though I am asking for an OBE or anything like that: just a token by way of a pat on the back, a "well done, old man". But no. The latest *Michelin Guide to Hotels and Restaurants* has just been published and we are not in it.

Just because we only serve food to animals is no reason for the Michelin men to leave us out. Our diners have just as much to be said for them as any pack of human pigs and cattle. So why should not the inspectors snoop, peer, taste and sip as much here as at the Manor or Gavroche? I have never let standards slip: the slop bucket is hardly without a shine lest an inspector arrives unannounced. My suspicions were aroused last

**FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY**

summer when a mysterious chap appeared on the farm and peered around the yard claiming to be from the council and intent on checking the drains.

Of course, what I was bursting to say to him and could not — and which may go to explain our absence from the new guide — is that this restaurant is not at its best in the summer. We run self-service from late April till the grass runs out at the end of October, but as the winter draws on, we reopen as the lushest feeding establishment you could wish to find.

Let me take you through the menu.

First of all the cattle and the horses all have oats, but no



ordinary oats. To get the best out of them and make them easily digestible they must be rolled to expose the inner goodness and crack the protective husk. Many feeding establishments would roll a couple of tons at a time and feed them as required, but not in this three-star joint. We roll them freshly every day so that none of the vital oils evaporates and the oat does not go stale. How many of the highly-rated Michelin establishments can boast that they serve fresh-rolled mussels every morning? Eh? Do you, Raymond?

That is the least of what we have to offer. After cereal comes the vegetable course, with mangels chopped by my own hands. The wild, knife-wielding Marco Pierre



White could not give those mangels as much attention as I do as I carve them almost to a fine julienne, and serve them while the sweet juices are still flowing. We do not drown them in sauce or

emblazon them with a slice of kiwi-fruit or our stock like good food straight, and they get it.

Of course, we vary the menu and on occasion feed green, leafy kale freshly cut from the fields. I

hear these top chefs boast of daily deliveries from Parisian markets, but from field to trough in less than half an hour is a feat few of them could beat.

We are able to give individual attention and cater for the personal needs of all our guests. Sage, our beloved white cow, is currently enjoying our full room service and has few complaints. Last week she gave us the most delightful bull calf: pure white with only black ears, nose and long, inviting eyelashes. We put her in a stable on her own to calve, and since she was delivered of her son, she has had luscious meals brought to her room with a smile.

Come to think of it, the fattening pigs are enjoying room service too, but their table manners and noisy habits tend to bring down the tone of the whole establishment and so we would prefer it if the inspector would give them a miss.

And what of the head waiter himself? Well, I carry myself with some dignity, even if laden with a forkful of heavy hay on my shoulder.

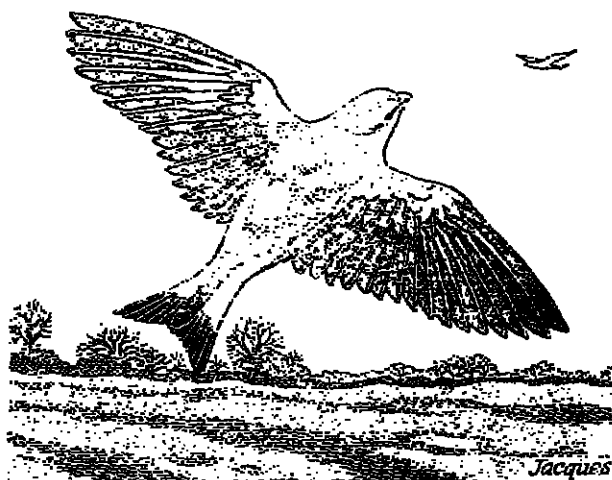
I try to keep a smile on my face even if, say, a young calf decides to leave the table without first asking and crashes through the gate in search of seconds.

I always try to give personal service and so, knowing that our red cow, Bilberry, is apt to be bullied at the trough by the more massive Prudence, I put a little extra on her plate.

As sommelier, I am painstaking in what I serve. There would be no point in filling Sage's water trough if some old wisps of straw had fallen in it. She would not touch it. "Corked," she would say.

I rest my case. As eating establishments go we take some beating. And there's no service charge, messieurs-dames.

## Feather report



The greenfinch sounds like a badly tuned nightingale

## Finch with a noisy kiss

**T**here is a new sound in town and countryside in the first week of February: the spring call of the male greenfinch. It is quite unmistakable, a wheezing sound that has been likened to a cork being slurped out of a bottle or a long noisy kiss.

The bird itself is quite unmistakable, too. It is a sturdy, even fat finch, bright green in colour, with yellow wing patches and a yellow rump that are conspicuous when it flies off.

As it goes, it usually breaks into another distinctive call, a rattling twitter that is like a stick being scraped across a ribbed board. By now, many greenfinches are in pairs, and the female loops away with the male as he goes. She is a duller green, but has the same bright yellow flashes as him.

A little later in the month we shall see the male's song-flight. He goes circling over his territory, rocking to left and right and beating his wings slowly. He sings as he flies, but the song is not particularly beautiful. It begins with the hard rattle, and then modulates into a ringing "chew-chew-chew", like a badly-tuned nightingale.

The greenfinch used to be mainly a bird of the fields, but weed-seeds such as persicaria and charlock have become harder to find, so it has moved into town parks and gardens. It has found a great appetite for the peanuts put out on bird-tables. It comes sweeping in and dominates the scene with its bulky look and stout beak.

It is very much a bird of green surroundings. During the winter, it roosts in flocks in rhododendron bushes, and in summer it chooses similar leafy evergreens to build its

nest in. I can still remember the first greenfinch's nest I ever saw, in a laurel hedge. The young were almost fully fledged, and like their parents already stout and greenish. The four of them were packed tight in the solid circle of roots and grass, and they looked like some juicy, exotic fruit in a box.

The adults bring a mixture of seeds and insects, which they regurgitate into the gaping beaks of their offspring. The young birds keep this food in their gullet for a while, and as the gullet is transparent, you can identify the seeds quite easily as they go down. When the young leave the nest, they are even noisier than their parents, and a long, hot July afternoon in the garden can be ruined by their squeaky whistles and trills as they call insistently for more food.

In the autumn they flock, but few of them emigrate. They go the round of the trees and hedges, looking for blackberries and rose-hips and hornbeam seeds.

There are probably half a million pairs nesting in Britain, usually with two broods, so with the surviving young there may be four or five million greenfinches around by December.

A great many of them die of starvation as the seeds dwindle away just about now. Their cry would be: "More peanuts, please!"

**DERWENT MAY**  
● What's about: *Birders* — great spotted and lesser spotted woodpeckers have started drumming. *Twickers* — rustic bunting. *Cambridgeshire*: white-bellied diver. *Grainard Bay, Highland*. Details from *Birdline*, 0891 700222. Calls cost 40p per minute at peak times, 30p at all other times.

## Christmas Island may be tiny, but its fishing appeal is immense

**I** imagine one of the most remote places on earth: a place so far from significant land and other human life that the mind could not seize the isolation of it, a place where the thought of the emptiness all about would have the same disorienting effect as trying to grasp the distance between stars.

Now take a map and find the Pacific Ocean. Put your fingertip dead-centre on the Equator and look near it. If the scale of the map is big enough there will be a dot the size of a pinprick and some small print. The print will say "Christmas Island".

That is where we are, wading waist-deep in a lagoon, teetering uncertainly in the slow, lifting swell. Only the green, crayed line of a promontory lies between us and the beyond. There is no sound save for the soft eases of the water as it reaches about me and the monotone roar from the reef.

"Here they come," Tamarua, our guide, sees it first. We follow the line of his black arm, pointing.

For long moments we see only the glare and the tugging light and the frigate bird on its jackknife wings, balancing along a thread of air. And then one fishing rod flashes and then the next in line and the next. And then I see it, a grey shade in the water, perhaps 20 yards long and maybe as wide. It is moving quickly and I cast.

When the fly hits the water the fish are already there: bonefish, the silvered ghosts of the coral flats, fish that elsewhere are found in ones and twos, but that in this place are found in shoals as dense and glinting as polished chain mail. The sport is all: eating a bonefish would be like eating mouthfuls of cotton wool scattered with pins.

The fight is as ferocious as it always is, except that this time the fish almost takes the rod from my hands, wrenching it down into a shallow arc over the water, ripping and juggling 100 yards of line out before I can gather my wits. I dare not touch the reel or I will burn my palm, as I did yesterday on a lesser fish, or splinter my fingernails on the whirling handles, as someone else has



An angler casts his line off Christmas Island as a guide points out a shoal of bonefish. Stalking the "jet-fuelled ghosts" is a rare experience

already done today. Eventually, though, this time I win. The fish rolls on to one side in the margins, Tamarua picks him up, estimates him at 9lb and I photograph him again and again, marvelling at scales so iridescent and silver that I can detect my own movements in them. Then I slip him free. In eight inches of water he dematerialises before my eyes. I watch his shadow, all that I can see, until I can see it no more.

In truth, waist-deep wading is the exception in bonefishing, but it has been necessary today to reach these extraordinary shoals. For the rest of our week at the Captain Cook Hotel we fish in the conventional bonefish way, stalking smaller groups, perhaps miles from land in water calf-deep.

This is delicate, skilful fishing that has no parallel in Europe, where sea fishing is a crude and hefting business, though not one without its skills. Stalking thin water for jet-fuelled ghosts — and stalking with a fly as for trout — is a rare experience. It is what has put bonefishing on the international fishing circuit in ten years, in such a big way.

Bonefish can be stalked in other places: the Bahamas, off Florida, Mexico, Belize and Venezuela — often for bigger fish. But Christmas Island stands just 12ft at its highest above sea level and the flats that the bonefish favour reach out all around. While bonefishing elsewhere can be a form of roulette, here it is a certainty. You could not come to Christmas Island with eyes to see and arms to cast, and not catch them.

This certainty of sport brings Americans, Japanese,

Australians, New Zealanders and, of course, Europeans to this isolated and beautiful place time and time over. One of our group has been here four years in succession. Another has been here eight.

But there is something else, something that brings even a few self-contained, non-fishing paravers as well. Christmas Island is everyone's idea of a South Seas atoll. It is not only a full-stop on the map, it is a full-stop in every sense for the lawyers, doctors, architects, academics, businessmen and others who fill the few available rooms.

The Captain Cook Hotel — the only hotel — has one telephone, recently installed, no television, and no radio. The island offers no shopping, no advertising, no traffic. Indeed, there are so few trucks, so few clapped-out cars on the only metalled road that the local people often sit in the middle of it, knowing that the drivers will drive around them.

But there are blue lagoons, white beaches and swaying palms, thatched villages and a settlement called Banana. Naked children play in dappled clearings and old men crouch over coconut quarters, drying them fruit-side up in the sun. Chickens cluck and scratch and make dark chicken shadows on the salt-white earth.

The airport sees one plane a week, has a check-in counter with a local youth sleeping flat out on top of it, and a

departure lounge where a bicycle props up the white hardboard wall.

There are no seasons on Christmas Island, least of all a tourist season. But there are bonefish, bonefish, bonefish all the year round — and that stunning change of pace. It is quite enough.

**BRIAN CLARKE**

● Brian Clarke's visit to Christmas Island was organised by Frontiers of 14 Old Bond Street, London W1X 3DB (071-493 0798), the sole agent in the UK for Christmas Island fishing. He flew Heathrow-Honolulu (via San Francisco) with United Airlines (001-800 8200), return fares from about £640. From Honolulu he

new Air Nauru to Christmas Island. Air Nauru's timetables are subject to change so flexibility in the schedule is advised. Frontiers offers a one-week package out of Honolulu, staying full board at the Captain Cook Hotel, from \$1,995 (about £1,330) per person sharing a double room.

● For fishing, special requirements include lightweight wading shoes and seawater reels with a powerful braking system. Standard lake fly-fishing gear is ideal. Most bonefish run 1lb-3lb, but bigger fish will be taken most days and 10lb is always a possibility.

● The midday sun is intense and a 30-50 factor sun screen is recommended. A wide-brimmed hat is essential. Because there are no shops, it is wise to take everything that might be needed.

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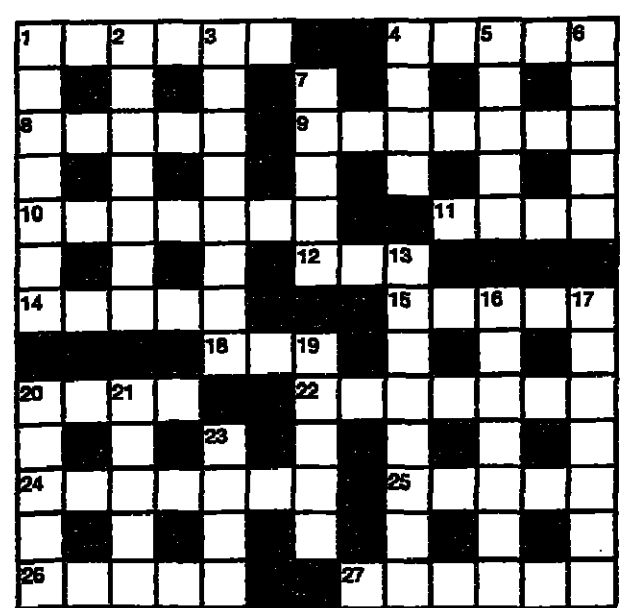
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Just released from Times Books: The Times Crosswords — Book 17, The Times Concise Crosswords — Book 5, The Sunday Times Crosswords — Book 12. £4.25 each inc adol.

## TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Old-fashioned haulier (6)
  - Transparent gemstone; hummingbird (5)
  - Admit (5)
  - Cathedral city; has an Imp (7)
  - Co-ordinated; dressed (7)
  - River crossing (4)
  - New (3)
  - Crack up (5)
  - Daughter of Lear (5)
  - Snake-like fish (3)
  - Uncultivated land in Africa (4)
  - Vehemently speak (against) (7)
  - Salad plant (7)
  - Prepare quickly; incur (3,2)
- DOWN**
- Confess (3,2)
  - Heavy drinking bout (6)
  - Akin (7)
  - One without illusions (7)
  - Confuse, snare (8)
  - Large marine fish, popular for food (4)
  - Snap (5)
  - Divided into areas of different use (5)
  - Clearing (5)
  - Go across (8)
  - Smiled unpleasantly (7)
  - One hasn't any chance (2,5)
  - Defamatory publication (5)
  - Bear who taught Mowgli (5)
  - The Devil (5)
  - Sally (4)

**SOLUTION TO NO 80**

**ACROSS:** 1 Mumbo 2 jumbo 3 Pommil 4 Ariel 5 Eyes 6 Rickshaw 7 Sepoy 8 Curry 9 Sizzling 10 Pass 11 Relax 12 Imagine 13 Hard-fought

**DOWN:** 1 Maple 2 Monkey-puzzle 3 Omnit 4 Unfair 5 Black 6 Sight-reading 7 Slowly 8 Dyslexia 9 Sisera 10 Envious 11 Sleet 12 Mavo

## WORDWATCHING

**By Raymond Keene**

Today's position is from the game Yusavin - Kramnik, FIDE Candidates Game 1, Wijk aan Zee 1994. 1... Nxe3, winning the exchange, looks tempting, but the passed White d-pawn could be very strong. Can Black do better? Send your answers on a postcard with your name and address to: The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday will win a British Chess Magazine book. The answer will be published next Saturday.

**Solution to last Saturday's competition:** 1... Rf8 (2 Bxf8 Qe1+ with perpetual check)

## WORDWATCHING

**By Philip Howard**

**BORDAGE**  
a. A kind of feudal tenure  
b. Right of Excise to board  
c. A savoury herb

**THURLING**  
a. A third-year ewe  
b. Celebrating  
c. Enslaving

**UTING**  
a. A Boer Outlander  
b. A Chinese bowl  
c. Steeping grain

Answers on page 15